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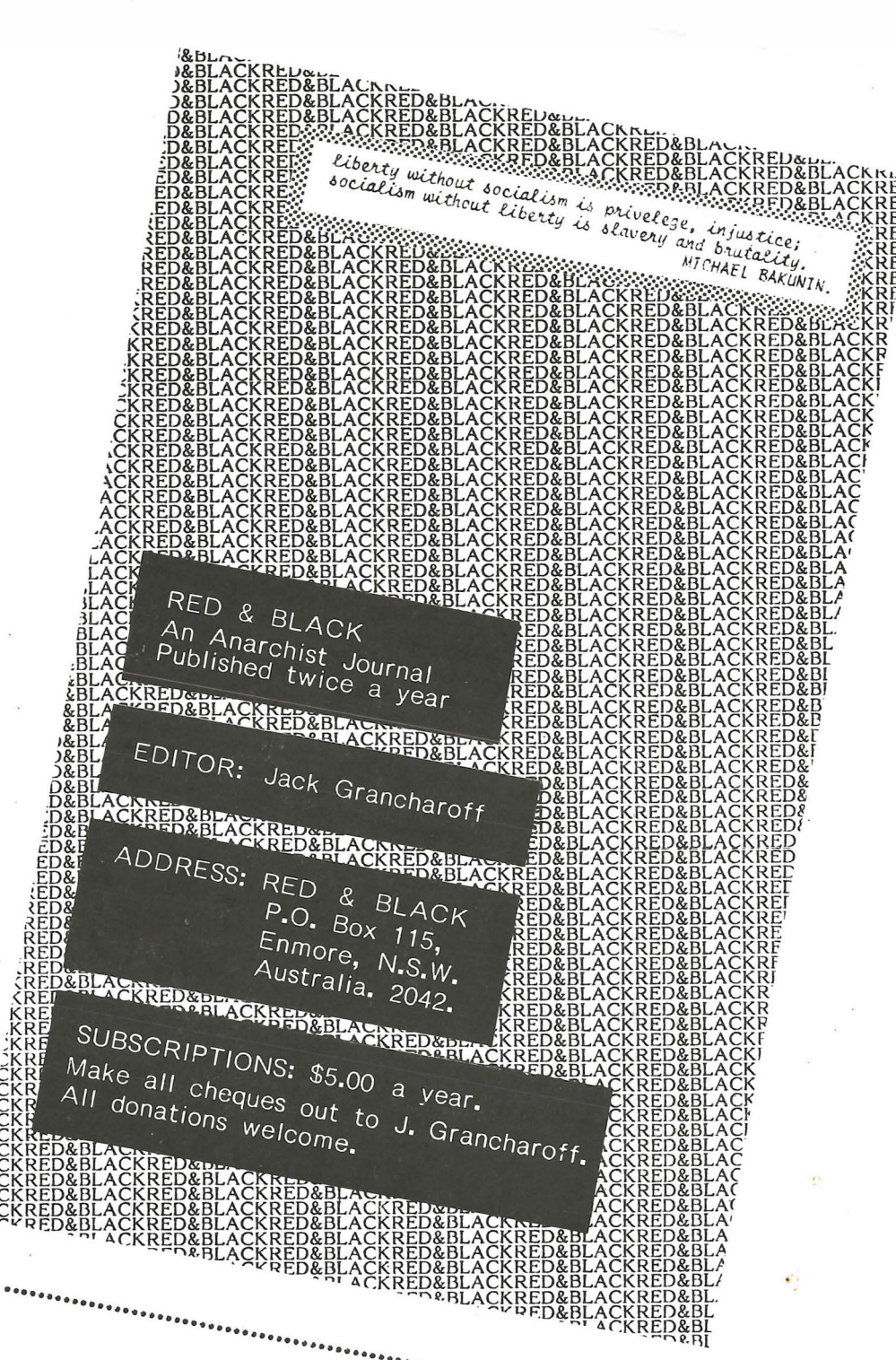
liberty without socialism is privelege, injustice;
socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality.
MICHAEL BAKUNIN.
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DEAR FRIENDS.....(INSTEAD OF AN EDITORIAL)

In a volcanic eruption of verbalism I heard the threatening noise: You have the choice that I choose for you to have. This rational irrationality made a vivid impression upon me. I call it "rational" because irrationality moves within a frame of rational components. The emotionally charged outburst of anger and rage of an helot, impotent but threatening, was the stormy petrel of a conflict of two opposites trying to search for equilibrium but, in fact, simply reversing the order of things. The cathartic rage was redolent with subservience and hierarchical sensibilities. It was the reflexion in the mirror of love and passions. Strange, the mirror sign and cause of feminine enslavement is also a trap which prevents my sister from escaping her subjection because she sees in the mirror of the other, the ugliest aspects of man: power, dominance and possession. Yet M-an sees in the mirror the soul of another being, W-oman. Yet, it seems, that the game we play is a perpetual self-infliction which, eventually, impoverishes both sexes, their quality of life, their human characteristics and, finally, frustrates all possibilities of establishing organic communality as an alternative to hierarchical authoritarian society.

If man is the mirror of the woman and vice-versa, and if they both see the importance and the implication of the mirror image, then the reality of our daily existence can change for the better. Thus we can perceive the dialectical richness, not of mutually exclusive but of complementary factors, and grasp the ecology of a sane society.

The mirror image is like a shadow but this shadow, due to our existential fears, uncertainties and complexes, is more existentially representative that the being it reflects. We impute to the shadow structurlessness, insensitivity, form but no essence, The real essence, invisible, untouchable and undefinable, acquires dimensions and attributes beyond any comprehension, unperceivable but mysterious, unknown but clad in religious ecstasy, nonsensical but an object of philosophical dissertations. In fact the essence is the shadow of our imagination, the emptiness of our thinking, the poverty of our volitions.

Nonetheless, it is the shadow of my sister that reminds me of the reality of my existence; her shadow the reflexion of mine. And when she, the helot, rebels against the restrictive practices of morality and, at the same time, demands my unconditional surrender to her moral norms: You have a choice but I choose your choice, she is the replica of man. She asserts her freedom by

the denial of mine. She appears to be a being of truth, I - an image of lie. It is tragic that even the mirror is forced to lie. If I am her image as she is mine, it implies that I partake of her making-up with the difference that the body of man is metamorphosed into a shadow of a woman, the reversal of patriarchical practice. The game is set in a vicious circle without exit. And here is the crux of the real issue: how to break the vicious circle? How to stop the perpetuation of a game: I am real, you are nothing. I am being, you are shadow and the list of thesis and anti-thesis continues ad infinitum. This is vulgar dialectical thinking.

To consider M-an versus W-oman as antithetical beings, to consider the parts of a whole as antithetical is plain obscurantism mystified as thinking, it is the failure to understand the function of the image. This specious dialectic has no value because it is not a process of learning, a process leading to knowledge, not knowledge consisting of an accumulation of facts rather the knowledge that transcends them and establishes the prerequisites for understanding. Dialectic implies the ability to synthesize not in the Marxist sense where life is subdued to abstracts in the service of teleological ends and the movement of inevitability of progressive stages whilst failing to see the oppression and dehumanization that their own experiments have led to.

To learn facts it is necessary to acquire knowledge, but knowledge that dwells on facts without understanding is dead and mechanical and lacks vision of objective as well as subjective realities. Such a knowledge has its fixation on dichotomies, contradictions and transcendental dialectics but it never advances the case of humanity, all it can do is to advance mechanical processes: prestige, power and hierarchies rather than emancipation, freedom and organic relationship. Dialectics is not a dead normative science, a stable conceptualization, legalized and enforced that deadens any critical enquiring and searching spirit, but a process , an action and a movement.

To deny existence to the other, or oneself, and to plunge dialectically into cosmic despair and search for meaning in non-existence is the longing of a schizophrenic, atomized, alienated and reified individual because only things are not aware of the fact that there are no bodies without shadows as there are no shadows without bodies. Being and non-being are related as body to a shadow. The death of one is the death of the other. To understand this relation is to understand the real being in its multifarious appearances, all of them of equal importance and in no way hierarchical. It is, also, to understand the ecology of "I" which is that of "You". Without You, as an image, there is not I as a being and vice-versa. Thus to dialectically conceive of I and not I, that is, I and You, opens rich vistas for putting the struggle for emancipation on tangible grounds: where the denial of your freedom is the denial of mine;the poverty of you is my poverty. If I, as a man, have crippled you for centuries, I have crippled myself also. I have emaciated myself, my image, my reality and all of my existence. A look

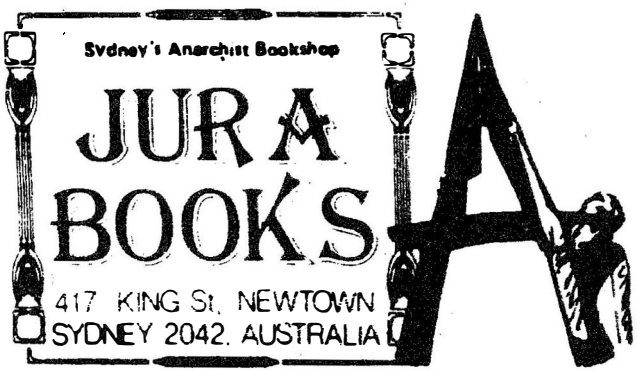
around me proves the foregoing statement beyond doubt. The cities are phalic: their strength is my impotence. Rockets are big phalic dimensions and their penetration is not only my rape but definitely my and your death. I, as a socialist, built the socialist fatherland and motherland which entombs my being and goals my individuality. In the name of atheism I revive the ghost of the past. As an iconoclast I built the cult of personality. In the name of internationalism I sustain and nourish nationalism. The countries I am building are militarily strong but humanly poor. I call my funeral procession, progress. And as a soldier of all trades I am the cannon fodder of my big brother, who watches me, spies on me and finally sacrifices me for my own good.

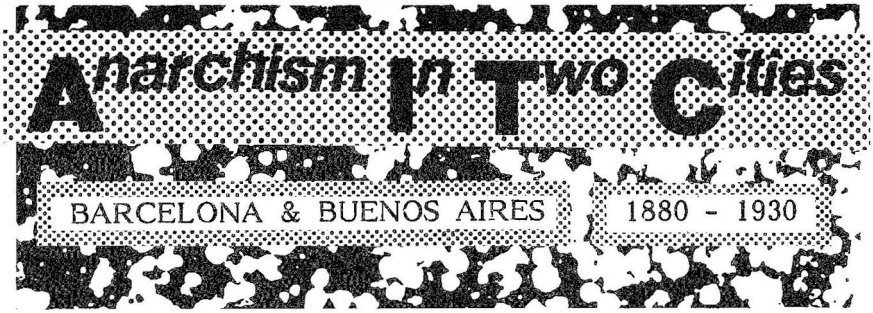
But where is my liberation, emancipation, self-assetion, personality and individuality? Where is my real being?

Well my friend, I have a choice on the conditions that it is your choice, therefore, I have no choice. The unfortunate consequences are that you do not see that your tongue's talk is a reversal of mine. Your being is a mirror image of mine and when you try to destroy your image of me, which reflects your being, you try to destroy yourself.

I think it is a time to re-evaluate our reflexions and give them a proper place in our mental emotional and bodily apparatuses. It is time to stop moralizing. I have no choice where dependency is rule, where ethics is a tag to normative morality and my being is subjected to hierarchical harassement. In this frame of reference I cannot think, learn, relate properly nor can I perceive the process of my becoming, of my realization, of my liberation. I am a slave and as such a master in outlook, whilst the master is a slave in luxuries. Both symbolize a reality which has to disappear if the free, whole, integral person is to appear. Remember your self image reflects the world of facts which are the conditions of my existence.

With love, Jack





INTRODUCTION

In the historical treatments of the labour movements in Spain and Argentina, Anarchism has emerged as the most insufficiently studied and least understood of the major ideological currents that shaped those movements in the period 1880 - 1930. Whether for ideological or other reasons, most of the studies dealing with this theme and period offer no serious appraisal of the anarchist tenets in the two labour movements. Yet it is clear that of the competing radical philosophies in the two countries, anarchism in its various forms, presented the most formidable challenge to their orders . Nowhere was this more apparent than in the cities of Barcelona and Buenos Aires, the most advanced centres of industrial capitalism in the two countries. Barcelona's working class was overwhelmingly committed to the anarchist-oriented National Confederation of Labour (CNT), which, by the 1930s, had established a far-reaching system of syndicalist self-management. Factories, utilities, transport facilities, retail and wholesale enerprises were taken over and administered by workers' committees and unions. A part-time guard of workingmen policed the city and popular revolutionary councils operated its judicial system. Although not to the same degree, anarchism too had a great impact among workers in Buenos Aires. The anarcho-syndicalist directed Regional Federation of Argentine Workers (FORA) influenced the vast majority of the working class of this city and in its peak had enrolled one quarter of the adult male work force in the country as a whole.

Histories of labour unsympathetic to the anarchist movement have tended to downplay its role, stress the violent aspects of its strategy, and have contended that the anarchist experiments were ill-conceived, too idealistic and lacking in any real substance. Such charges have provoked a reply from Murray Bookchin who had started studying anarchism in the 1960s. In his view, "Spanish anarchism remained above all a peoples' movement, reflecting the cherished ideals, dreams, and values of ordinary individuals, not an esoteric credo and tightly knit professional party far removed from the everyday experiences of the villager and factory worker. The resiliency and tenacity that kept Spanish anarchism alive in urban barrios and rural pueblos for nearly seventy years despite

unrelenting persecution, is understandable only if we view this movement as an expression of plebeian Spanish society itself rather than as a body of exotic libertarian doctrines."(1)

A reevaluation of anarchism in Spain took place in 1969 as a result of an exchange of polemics between Noam Chomsky and Gabriel Jackson, the former charging the latter of ignoring the role of the anarchists during the Spanish Civil War. Since then, the volume of works devoted to this study has increased impressively. Although the majority of the treatments have continued to focus on anarchism within the Spanish Civil War period, more recently, there has been a definite shift towards covering the earlier formative period and the discussion of issues beyond the conventional ones apparent in political histories.

Studies of anarchism in Argentina have not yet been able to transcend the parameters of political and philosophical histories. Nor has anarchism been yet fully acknowledged as the dynamic phenomenon it was in the Argentine Labour movement. Part of the problem lies in the approaches and methodology applied in this labour history, as is true of studies of the history of the labour movement in Latin America generally. Charles Bergquist explains:

> Latin Americanists have ignored the historical importance of labour in large part because we have looked in the wrong place. We have applied uncritically orthodox Marxist and liberal approaches to labour history that were most appropriate to the historical development of the world capitalist system.(2).

This, as Bergquist argues, has led to an artificial-like analysis of labour where the types of behaviour are somehow 'predicted'. The result has been wide assumptions and generalisations that have ignored the specifity of any one group, class or movement. One major casualty of this approach has been the study of the anarchists. Bergquist raises the question, among others, of why Anarcho-Syndicalism appealed to the masses of workers and of how was this movement able to mobilise these in such great numbers for action. He has been unable to find the answers to these questions in the available literature. In his own words: Scholarly research on these questions is just beginning, and the bulk of the extant literature is descriptive and polemical."(3)

What follows is a review of a selected number of scholarly works that deal directly or indirectly with the anarchist movements in Spain and Argentina. This treatment is narrowed to the issues raised on these movements for Barcelona and Buenos Aires. Such a comparison has proved to be both justifiable and fruitful. The anarchist movements emerged at approximately the same time in two cities that, as ports, were experiencing growth in the export sector. This economic growth was accompanied by a concomitant growth in the number of industrial workers, foreign capital investment, in-migration of workers, and militant workers protest. The

period 1880- 1930 is a significant one. It was in the 1880s that anarchism really took off and evolved into a mass movement. The years 1930/31 presented a new era for anarchism in the two cities, but ones that had diametrically opposite ramifications for each. For Barcelona, it heralded an end to state repression as a result of the election of the Republican government and a relative free climate in which to grow unabated till its brutal repression in 1939. By contrast, for Buenos Aires, it marked an end to relative freedom of organisation, the assumption of power by a military dictatorship and the subsequent outlawing of all anarchist activity. The FORA was driven underground and has never since been able to recover the strength it had known prior to 1930. Similarly, the CNT, while witnessing a degree of revival in the post-Franco period, has not been able to muster the same amout of support it had solicited half a century earlier.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As noted earlier histories of the labour movement of Argentina or to 1930 have been more descriptive and polemical than analytical, and one needs to search hard for any separate treatments of anarchism. Fanny Simon's article, Anarchism and Anarcho Syndicalism in South America,(4) published in 1946,has many references to Buenos Aires but offers no major interpretations.She emphasises Italian and Spanish immigration as accounting for the growth of anarchism there but fails to substantiate this theory. In short, this piece is more a chronicle of the main highlights of the movement than an analysis. An article by the former professor of Social Psychology, Eduardo Colombo, titled Anarchism in Argentina and Uruguay is useful as an overview summary but inadequate as a detailed study. A more thorough study, albeit with some limitations, is found in the book, El Anarquism y el Movimiento Obrero en Argentina by Iaacov Oved.(6) Based on his Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Tel Aviv, it is probably the most intensive study published on Angentine anarchism to date. Relying mostly on on primary sources (including archival material, anarchist and non-anarchist newspapers, memoirs, government reports), this is essentially a study of the political evolution of Argentine Anarchism from the period 1880 to 1905. Although not directly concerned with anarchism, the works by Hobart Spalding and Charles Bergquist assess anarchism within the wider context of the labour movement in Latin America.(7) Although their coverages are short, both examinations offer perceptive insights.

For Spain, studies of anarchism have been far more accessible. The majority of the works consulted for this essay are mixed in terms of the issues discussed and in their interpretations. With the exception of Jean Bercarud's and Gilles Lapuge's Los Anarquistas Espanoles,(8) all have contributed in one way or another to the scholarship of anarchism in Spain. Los Anarquistas Espanoles is a translation of the original French edition of 1969. It purports to be a psychological history of Spanish Anarchism and the intention

is to introduce this to the French public. Unlike the others it is not based on any original material and has no scholarly merit. J. Romero Maura's article, The Spanish Case (9) is a theoretical study tracing the origins of anarchism to the Spanish Civil War. Abel Paz's Durruti: The People Armed (10) is a partial translation of the French original. In this very readable account of Buenaventura Durruti, the life of the revolutionary anarchist is traced from his birth in 1896 to his death in 1936. This study offers more than simply an annotated biography; it examines the economic and social conditions in which anarchism developed, Durruti's contacts with anarchists abroad, and some of the strategies and tactics of the anarchists.

Murray Bookchin's The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years 1868-1936 (11) is probably the most balanced and complete study of Spanish Anarchism thus far for this period. The author was a member of the Communist party who later identified with the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM), and lived in Spain during the Civil War. The first of two volumes planned on the Spanish Anarchist movement, it deals primarily with organisational and social issues, the height of the movement and its drift to the Civil War. Bookchin offers new interpretations in his study such as contending that the Spanish section of the First International was Anarcho-Syndicalist from its very inception in the early 1870s and, thus, did not take its origins in France in the twentieth century. Temma Kaplan's, Other Scenarios: Women and Spanish Anarchism,(12) as the title suggests, is concerned with women. This short article is written from a feminist perspective. A series of mainly reprinted articles written from a standpoint sympathetic to anarchism appear in the book edited by Albert Meltzer, A New World in Our Hearts: Faces of Spanish Anarchism.(13) These include an article by Frank Mintz on the Spanish labour movement. Mintz addresses the question as to why anarchism remained intact in Spain, when it all but disappeared in the rest of Europe. He concludes that unlike elsewhere, the anarchist movement in Spain had a grass-roots leadership. It was started by the people and was for the people. There were no 'petty bourgeois' intellectuals directing it. Another key to the answer were the goals of the movement which can be summarised as follows: a) Direct Action; loosely defined, this meant the refusal of direct negotiation with the bosses, and, as both a display of strength and solidarity, the initiation of strikes, boycotts and the presenting of demands to win as many concessions as possible; b) One Big Union: this called for the union of all workers disregarding their artificial categories; c)Federalism: federalism allowed for the flexibility of action of the CNT. Each local committee could take initiatives without consulting the central board. The National Committee of the CNT employed only one full-time member, its secretary. This was a deliberate ploy to discourage careerists and to ensure that those who held office in local unions remained in touch with workers in the shop floor.

Max Dashar's contribution on the origins of the anarchist movement in Spain was originally published in 1934. The main focus of the

study is state-labour confrontations and the relations between anarchists and other political associations. Albert Meltzer's 'The Spanish Workers Movement' is written in a polemical style but is useful as a summary of the political highlights of the anarchist movement. Jose Peirats, who was the official historian of the CNT, outlines its ideology and principles in his 'What is the CNT'. Self Management in Action' is an excerpt of Gaston Leval's book Collectives in the Spanish Revolution and examines the origins of the anarchist collectives during the Spanish Civil War. Andrew Giles-Peters' article discusses the reemergence of syndicalism after Franco's death. He states that even under the dictatorship, when the movement functioned underground, it counted with 50.000 members. After Franco's death, the CNT sponsored a successful 3-day festival in July of 1977 which attracted 300,000 -500,000 people. The new tendencies in the Spanish Anarchist movement are examined, and this is also the theme of Meltzer's article 'The Debate on Spanish Anarchism Today'. Robert Kern's, Red Years/Black Years: A Political History of Spanish Anarchism, 1931-1937 (14) is a study of the Anarchists' political behaviour and is more concerned with the 1931-1937 period than the earlier periods. The main thesis is that anarchism survived by 1931 as the only radical philosophy because it alone was sufficiently decentralised, militant and violent to cope with government abuses. Finally, Rafael Nunez Florencio's El Terrorismo Anarquista, 1888-1909 (15). is a philosophical analysis of the use of terrorism in anarchist actions. He sees his work as a departure from the conventional practice of scholarship on anarchism to centre either on its origins and the First International, or on the CNT and the Spanish Civil War. He feels that the intermediate period, which witnessed large-scale propaganda and violence, has largely been forgotten. The years 1888-1909 have been chosen since the former marked the demise of the Federation of Workers in the Spanish Region (FTRE) and subsequently the rejection of organisation and extreme individualism to 1909, the year of the Tragic Week (Seman Tragica) which occurred a little before the founding of the CNT.

The issues raised in the literature above are discussed in more detail below.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To understand how powerful labour movements were permitted to crystallise in the two cities, one needs to examine the economic conditions that gave rise to them. This is a theme that is covered in most of the works consulted and what follows is a brief synthesis. In the late 19th century, Barcelona's economy was based on the wine market, copper, iron and lead industries, banking and a dynamic textile industry. The ever-expanding economy saw the growth of an industrial proletariat and an active middle-class of merchants, small-scale industrialist and artisans. The late 19th century and early 20th century saw an economic boom. particularly in the textile industry, which attracted foreign capital and migrant labour. By 1918, more than 80 foreign companies had opened subsidiaries in Catalonia. Canadians owned the electrical utilities, the U.S. and British the telephone system, and General Motors the production of trucks.(16) Barcelona was attractive to commercial activity partly because of the abundance and cheapness of labour there. During World War I there was a demand for Spanish products which lasted till 1919 so that industry, commerce and maritime transport increased their activities. Economic growth, however, was not accompanied by any real improvements in the standards of living of workers nor in the conditions at work. There appears to be a consensus in the literature that accidents were a common feature in the factories, sanitary conditions were poor, public education did not exist, and that competition for jobs kept wages down. It was under such conditions that the labour movement grew.

The economic development of Buenos Aires followed a similar pattern. Passing into an era of modernisation in the late 19th century, the Argentine economy was pegged to the export sector which comprised grains and meat. Ater 1900, foreign capital was especially pronounced in meat processing, shipping, public lighting, communications, banks, manufacturing and insurance. Much of the activity in the export sector took place in the city of Buenos Aires and its environs. The labour force catering to the export economy was largely composed of immigrant workers. By 1914, 3/4 of the adult population of Buenos Aires was foreign born. (17) However, as in Barcelona, the working class were subjected to poor working conditions, long working hours, low sanitary standards, and multiple abuses on the part of their employers.

THE ORIGINS OF ANARCHISM

While most authors place the origins of Anarchism in Spain with the arrival of Bakunin's emissary, Giuseppe Fanelli, Bookchin stresses the importance of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's federalist views as having had widespread acceptance in Spain, and, in particular, in Barcelona. However, there is general agreement that Fanelli's visit to Spain in 1868 when his founding of the Spanish section of the First International (which in 1870 numbered 2,000 members) can be considered the starting point of organised anarchism in

Spain. By 1874 it had attracted 50,000 members especially among the textiles workers of Barcelona and the peasants of Andalucia. But while for most of the late 19th century the anarchists of Barcelona (till the 1890) advocated the principles put forward by Mikhail Bakunin (known as 'Anarcho-Collectivism') the anarchists of the South emphasised more the ideas of Peter Kropotkin and Errico Malatesta (referred to as 'Anarcho-Communism'). With the founding of the CNT, 'Anarcho-Syndicalism' became the predominant brand of Anarchism (these theories are discussed more fully later on in this essay).

Bookchin believes that Bakunin's ideas were suited to Spain because of its tradition of uprisings, the topographic features, the rigid land tenure system and its cultural diversity. This diversity and the relative autonomy of the Spanish regions, he argues, would be more receptive to Bakunist ideas of federalism than Marx's emphasis on centralisation. There was an intense feeling for community at a local level and it was this inclination in Barcelona that converted trade unions and the factory into a type of 'community'. Bookchin adds that Bakunin's atheist views coincided with the anti-clerical mood in 19th century Spain where the catholic hierarchy was perceived as colluding with the ruling classes.

Kern argues that a major reason why anarchism was adopted rather than Marxism was that he put his arguments in simpler terms: "Human reason as the only criterion of truth, human conscience as the basis of justice, individual and collective freedom as the source of order in society."(18) Bakunin called for a rejection of everything authoritarian; the state had to be replaced by an elected judiciary, free individuals, free communes and self-managing productive associations. He stressed the possibility of uniting the rural and urban proletariats into one whole and criticised Marx's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This dictatorship, he argued, would be composed of intellectuals and technicians.

After a period of repression, anarchism in Barcelona was represented by the Bakunist-inspired FTRE founded in 1882. In 1888, a split occurred among Spanish Anarchists, as to whether they should move toward syndicalism or remain purely anarchist in outlook in the variety proposed by Kropotkin. The latter became the predominant brand adopted in Barcelona, characterised by the strategy 'Propaganda by the Deed' till the late 1900s. The Amsterdam Congress of Anarchists in 1907 accepted syndicalism as a branch of Anarchism and, with the founding of the CNT in 1911, syndicalism emerged as the major tenent among Barcelona's Anarchists. With an initial membership of 50,000, the CNT recruited 500,000 by 1919 (abetted in part by the Bolshevik Revolution, high inflation and growing unemployment). The CNT continued to grow so that by July of 1936, its membership reached 1,600,000. (19)

The base of support for Anarchism in Barcelona began with the textile workers and skilled craftsmen in small shops, but it soon attracted workers in most other sectors.

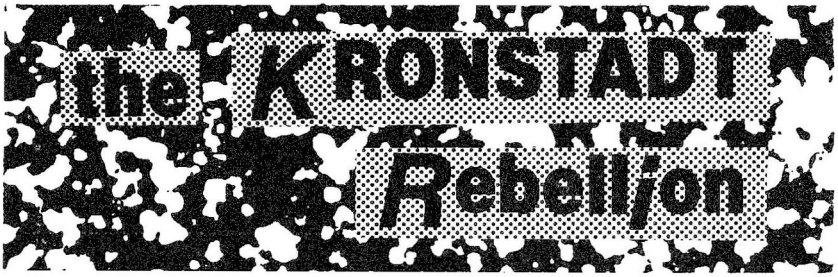
The first hints of anarchism in Buenos Aires were the founding of a section of the First International in 1871/72, not by Spanish and Italian immigrants as is widely believed, but by their French counterparts. Later, Spanish and Italian immigrants joined the section. The initial group was small and only in the 1880s, with the arrival of former activists from abroad to direct it, did anarchism evolve into a mass movement. The two major currents in the early period mirrored those in Spain: Anarcho-Communism and Anarcho-Collectivism. The movement was greatly strengthened by the consolidation of anarchist groupings into the Argentine Federation of Labour (FOA) in 1901, renamed the Argentine Regional Federation of Labour (FORA) in 1905. The predominant current was Anarcho-Communist. After 1915, Syndicalism became the main brand advocated. Anarchists mobilised workers for strikes in Buenos Aires from the 1880s onwards. The peak for mobilisation was in 1919 when some 309.000 workers participated in a general strike.(20) Strikes were organised by the anarchists right up to 1930.

As for their source of support, Spalding asserts that,"Many movement militants, mostly anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists, came from an artisanal backgound."(21) Spalding attributes this to the fact that artisans could often read and write and possessed a tradition of independent action. Their militancy derived from changes in economic patterns where industrialisation had placed pressures on the manufacture by hand of products in small shops. As in Barcelona, while it is plausible that anarchism had started with a base of workers of artisanal background in Buenos Aires, it should be emphasised that it soon commanded a mass following among workers in other sectors. Bergquist states that the backbone of FORA were not the artisan but the railway and maritime unions.(22)

In both cities, anarchism saw fluctuations in membership owing to government repression in the forms of violence and legislature curtailing its activities. Both suffered a Seman Tragica: Barcelona in 1909 and Buenos Aires a decade later, where workers fought a week-long pitched battle with police resulting in numerous deaths. With General Primo de Rivera's coup d'etat in 1923, the anarchists in Barcelona were formally outlawed. In Buenos Aires, the government gave unlimited powers to the police in 1902, with the Residence Law, and in 1910, with the Law of Social Defence, to arrest and deport immigrant activists in the labour movement.The governments of Spain and Argentina, along with other governments of the time, often exchanged information of anarchist activities and planned common strategies to combat the movement. Employers in both cities operated similar tactics against anarchists: a private police (in Barcelona known as the 'pistoleros'), lock-outs, scab labour, and a network of informers.

And yet, in spite of these restraints, the anarchists were still able to launch mass general strikes in the two cities, these sometimes coinciding with one another (the notable ones of 1902, for instance).

(to be continued)



In the continuance of the civil war between 1920 and 1922, one conflict stands out, the rebellion at Kronstadt. This is not only because of its extremely dramatic qualities, or even because there is more known about it than the shadowy peasant rebellions in Russia's backlands. Kronstadt represented the moment when the Russian people could have overthrown the Bolsheviks and realized some of the aims of the original revolution: after its failure the agrarian and independent soviet movements were doomed. Historically this rebellion is one of the most controversial issues in Russian history.

Just as there are opposing legends about Trotsky's life, this rebellion created two legends. In the Bolshevik legend, a naval base full of ultra left hotheads was led by white guard agents into a rebellion which would have perpetuated the civil war and destroyed the achievements of the revolution. In the anti-Bolshevik legend, the most incorruptible, good section of the working class arose to defend the revolution from its new oppressors, and were massacred to the last hero by Trotsky, who totally falsified all evidence on white guard involvement.

Nearly every historian excepting Trotsky himself, saw the 1921 rebellion and its suppression as proof that something was very wrong in the relationship between the Bolshevik leadership and the people it supposedly represented. No other group in Russia had such a revolutionary record as the Kronstadters. Revolutionary groups were continually operating there from 1880 onwards.[1] The first mutiny which quickly developed into a battle occurred in Kronstadt's square in October 1905, and was followed by a larger more serious disturbance a few months later. In 1910 and 1912, when the rest of Russia was quiet under Czarist rule, Kronstadt had rebelled.[2] During World War I a series of strikes, riots and mutinies against the war and conditions affected the base. Under the leadership of Dybenko, the Kronstadters mutinied at the front and demanded their right to return home. This was in 1916, the first example of the mutinies which would topple Czarism a few months later.[3] The Kronstadters enthusiastically supported the February Revolution as soon as it began, and at a time when most of the Bolshevik leadership supported Kerensky, they resolutely opposed him, declaring the city of Kronstadt to be an independent Republic.[4] They formed massive contingents

in the near revolution of the July days, and also later in the October Revolution. During the civil war they formed crack troops who served as emergency stiffening reserves in many crucial battles. Although they suffered many casualties the base remained operative, acting as both a training ground for recruits for the front, and as a fortress protecting Petrograd. In the constituent assembly elections in November 1917, Lenin chose Kronstadt as his electorate, which returned the highest vote for the Bolsheviks in all of Russia, giving Lenin a civilian vote of 58%, and among the sailors' sections 80.3%, and in the military 85.3%.[5] Lenin frequently threatened to "go to the sailors" and use them to implement by force what the party would not allow. Trotsky praised them on many occasions. To him they were "the pride and glory of the revolution", "fighting crusaders", and "the warrior samurai", defenders of the soviet order who were in 1917 "far ahead of all other forces". Raskalnikov called Kronstadt "the impregnable citadel of the revolution".[6]

In soviet posters, paintings, films and sculpture of the era, the Kronstadters are shown as paragons of revolutionary dedication, acting as the rapt audience and guard for Lenin at public meetings, or exhorting the Red Army troops to follow them into charging the enemy. They came to symbolize the revolutionary Russian masses both within Russia and in the outside world, in the same way that the Coldstream Guards symbolize British conservative traditions. Their rebellion came as suddenly as a flash of lightning, and caused as much dismay and furore within Bolshevik ranks as a rebellion by the Coldstream Guards against the monarchy would in Britain's Conservative Party.

Very few military groups have such an ultra-revolutionary record. But at Kronstadt there were many peculiar circumstances and they are worth studying in detail. The justification put forward by Lenin, Trotsky and Deutscher, that the Bolshevik dictatorship became necessary, because the industrialized, well-educated proletariat was barely existent, and scattered and weak where it did exist, can be shown to be a fallacy.

Kronstadt was a massive naval fort on Katlin Island, twelve miles from Petrograd. As well as being a naval base, the city was a commercial and shipbuilding centre and a trading port. It was the training ground, disciplinary centre and major base for Russia's massive and far-flung Baltic Fleet. Deutscher describes the navy as being predominantly peasant based.[7] Official naval documents show previous occupations of the sailors just before the revolution to be - farmers 23.2%, seamen 11.8%, metal craftsmen 9%, fishermen 2.9%, machinists 3.6%, stokers 3.8%, and the remainder scattered over several occupations. A total of over 62% were proletarians or semi-proletarians.

In 1917 between 37% and 48% were peasants; in 1921 the proportion was probably around the same.[8]

Many of these peasants would have been proletarianized by their naval training. Far from being untrained cannon fodder, the sailors of the Baltic Fleet were usually highly skilled tradesmen.

Apart from the sailors, the revolutionary Kronstadters consisted of regiments of soldiers and marines, cadets in training, merchant navymen, shipbuilders, and a smattering of commercial tertiary and civil service sections. As both Raskalnikov and Voline pointed out, the sailors were really proletarianized civilians put into uniform, bringing their class problems with them. The inherent inequality within the fleet, the bad conditions, and the eccentric and extraordinarily brutal discipline combined to foment a permanent desire for revolution.[9] This was intensified by easy contact with the revolutionary ideas of western Europe, which were carried on nautical trade routes, by the nationalist resentment of conscripted Ukrainian and Baltic peasants, and by easy contact with the resentful proletariat of Petrograd.

Kronstadt, Petrograd and the nearby Baltic cities were geographically, temperamentally and economically closer to western Europe than the medieval slavic heartland of backward peasant Russia. This area did not even have such a past history. Peter the Great settled the area in the late seventeenth century with builders, traders and dockworkers who mainly came from western Europe. As he intended, Petrograd became Russia's "window to the west" and in doing so became Russia's most westernized area - and one of the most proletarianized, industrialized areas in the world. The Putilov and Nobel factories for example were among the world's largest. Petrograd's dockyards, railway yards and warehouse areas covered massive sections of the city. The exact number of factories is unknown but even after seven years of war and economic devastation, there were still well over sixty of the largest operating until early 1921.[10]

Apart from the proletariat, Petrograd was a centre for western style tertiary and intellectual fields. It had a widely respected university and many other colleges, galleries, theatres, museums, and government offices. Its palaces, orchestras, ballet and opera companies were considered among Europe's best. This city had some medieval and peasant aspects, but these were insignificant. With the 1921 rebellion, the long-term background causes have been mentioned to an extent in previous chapters. Voline claimed that the Bolsheviks slyly broke up the base at Kronstadt in early 1918 because they feared its independent spirit.[11] Certainly there were many conflicts between the more independent Kronstadters and the Bolsheviks between late 1917 and the rebellion.

The unease with which some Kronstadters saw the Bolsheviks take others' credit and then establish a monopoly of power, as well as the squabble over the collective housing issue, have been previously dealt with. There were a number of other incidents during the civil war. The enforced disarming of the people, the breaking up of the fleet, the suppression of the anarchists, the execution

of Admiral Shchastny, the unpopular peace of Brest Listovsk, and the tensions between the Bolsheviks and the Social Revolutionaries led to three near mutinies between April and October 1918. Many of these radical demands pre-empted those of the 1921 rebellion. Not all rebellions in the Baltic Fleet were left wing. In June 1919 marines at Krasnya Gorka, a fortof the Baltic Fleet, mutinied and the traitors executed thirty prominent communists before the Kronstadters, led by Stalin, smashed them.

Although other bases had stayed loyal, there were several purges "suspicious" officers and intellectuals as well as their families were liquidated. Another purge consisted of lining up loyal sailors, ordering every fifth man to step forward for leave, and then shooting them before the survivors' eyes.[12]

This was one of several purges in Kronstadt. The first was in February 1917 when the sailors themselves killed about two hundred officers in revenge for the brutal discipline they endured. A large number of officers who had leftist sympathies, or who had been lenient with the sailors, were spared. Then in mid-1918 Zinoviev ordered the execution of three hundred officers, and a local cheka was set up for the surveillance of possible traitors. Krasna Gorka, being several miles from Kronstadt, apparently received little attention. Then in the autumn of 1920 Raskalnikov, on Trotsky's orders, conducted an inter-party purge. Apart from insubordination and near mutinies, there was other proof that the image of the Baltic Fleet as fanatically loyal Bolsheviks was overgeneralized. In the split over Brest Listovsk, Dybenko led a large detachment of Kronstadters to fight the Germans against Lenin's wishes. Some Left Social Revolutionaries from the Baltic Fleet took part in the failed coup against the Bolsheviks in July 1918. Others joined the Makhnovites or the Greens.[13]

A squabble between Raskalnikov and Trotsky on one hand, and Kuzmin and Zinoviev on the other, for control of the Baltic Fleet's administrative apparatus dragged on from late 1920 to February 1921, and probably contributed to disillusionment with the Communists. Even before the rebellion, Kronstadt's membership had dropped alarmingly. There were 5,630 sailor members in March 1920, and only 2,228 in late 1920. Resignations and lapsed memberships, rather than casualties were the cause. Civilian membership dropped about 40% in the same period.[14]

In late 1919, just when it was becoming evident that the White Guards were losing the civil war, Trotsky, with Lenin's full backing, unveiled and started putting into practice his plan for the future of Soviet Russia. It was known as the "Militarization of Labor", a title which gives some idea of how Trotsky intended labor to be organized: basically it was a more severe version of war communism, and Trotsky stated that, unlike war communism, it was not a brief stage, it would last at least a generation.

If this was not enough, Lenin was publicly stating that although the White Guard armies were defeated, there were still other enemies within Russia, and beyond them was the international bourgeoisie. Basic freedoms were not possible until the global class war resulted not only in global socialism, but in reaching a point where class rule was a dim ancestral memory.[15] This cheery prospect was probably the last straw.

For the Russians it seemed as if war was an eternal state. Apart from widespread banditry, peasant rebellions and the invasion of Georgia, another aggressive war was being fought against the Poles. In early 1920 Pilsudski, the militarist dictator of Poland, had made a cynical deal with Petluria. In return for aid and attacking the Bolsheviks, Petluria would grant Pilsudski territory in the Western Ukraine. Bolshevik and Makhnovite counter-attacks defeated Pilsudski's offensive, but then Lenin, with the support of most of the Bolshevik hierarchy, launched an offensive war, designed not only to spread revolution into Poland, but to conquer Western Europe. Despite an armistice being declared in October 1920, a sense of being at war continued until mid-March 1921. Except for the Polish campaign, Trotsky was enthusiastic about all these continuations of the civil war.

Red Petrograd was one of the last places in Russia to rebel against the Bolsheviks. History seemed to be repeating itself. On February 19 and 21, 1917, the first Russian Revolution began when starving housewives in Petrograd's bread lines rioted. The revolution accelerated two days later when women factory workers spontaneously went on strike to celebrate International Women's Day. The strikes began in the Vyborg district and were not led by any political party but spread rapidly. The Czarist government alleged the strike was led by paid German agents. At first, the Czarist army and police dispersed the demonstrations, often half-heartedly, but after the calling of a general strike on February 25, the armed forces began to divide between those who supported Czarism, those who sat on the fence, and those who joined the revolution. Czar Nicholas being absent from the city, bombarded the Petrograd commander, General Khabalov with urgent directives for subduing the rebellion. The strikers and demonstrators were gaining more support as their demands, which began with bread, spread to include "land to the peasants", "an end to the war", "freedom", and from some sections "a democratic constituent assembly".

On February 27 the Kronstadters joined the revolution and killed the arch reactionary Admiral Wiren and many others. The last reactionary forces in Petrograd surrendered, and the revolution spread to Moscow and the rural areas. Eleven days after the first bread riots began, the last Czar abdicated.

For a few brief days, it seemed as if Lenin and Trotsky would be overthrown as easily as the Czar, and the real aims of Russia's revolution would be realized.

On February 23, 1921, workers in the Trubochny factory went on strike, demanding an increase in the food ration and better winter clothing. Once again the strikers took to the streets and were joined by other disaffected workers and strikers. Zinoviev was governor of Petrograd for Lenin, just as Khabalov had been for the Czar, and he acted in the same manner. Troops were called out and fought the strikers, whose numbers were multiplying. Exactly the same slogans followed the initial issue of food. Once more the revolution called for land to the peasants, for peace and freedom, for workers' control of the factories, and for all power to the soviets. The call "down with the Czar" was replaced with "Down with Trotsky and Zinoviev", "Down with the Commissars", and "Smash the New Nobility". As in 1917, Kronstadt followed Petrograd's lead by a few days, but with less fury than before. On February 26, a mass meeting at the city decided to send delegations to Petrograd to investigate the workers' complaints, and a sympathetic mass meeting supported their claims and expressed solidarity two days later in public meetings in Anchor Square, the city centre.

Even at the time, the similarities between 1917 and 1921 were noticed. When Zinoviev called a meeting to shrilly denounce the rebels as troublemakers and dupes of the French, English and White Guard forces, one aged veteran stood up and told the truth:

> "Barely three years ago Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and all of you," he shouted, "were denounced as traitors and German spies. We, the workers and sailors, had come to your rescue and saved you from the Kerensky Government. It was we who placed you in power. Have you forgotten that? Now you threaten us with the sword. Remember you are playing with fire. You are repeating the blunders and crimes of the Kerensky Government. Beware that a similar fate does not overtake you!"[16]

This is confirmed by Serge and Berkman - the latter could find no-one among Petrograd's Bolsheviks who really believed in the white guard conspiracy theory, and Serge was amazed at the amount of deliberately manufactured lies the Bolsheviks were telling.[17] As in 1917, unrest spread to Moscow, then through some regiments, universities and railway unions.

History, however, never repeats itself exactly. By March 3 the uprising in Petrograd was contained, and Kronstadt was isolated. The reasons are not hard to find. Petrograd's population had dropped from 1,200,000 in 1917 to 700,000 in 1921, and these people were more dispirited, ill and disorganized.[18] This meant fewer troops were needed to suppress the rebels. Nor were the Bolsheviks as disorganized, as slow-witted or as disheartened as the Czarists had been. Zinoviev, Trotsky and Lenin were quick to do a deal with the western powers and rush such luxury goods as coal and chocolate to Petrograd, and grant some of the minor demands such as

an end to meddlesome road block detachments and permission to use trains for delivering firewood. The discontented battalions of militarized labor were demobilized and quickly encouraged to return to their far-off homes. This was the soft part of the defusing programme. At the same time more chek army and civilian volunteers were rushed to Petrograd. Suspected rebels and members of other political parties were quickly jailed. No returning Kronstadters from the war fronts were allowed back to their base; in Petrograd's factories the secret police stood watch over the factory benches with pistols and machine guns at the ready, looking for signs of discontentment.

This playing of soft and hard defused the revolution in Petrograd and so made Kronstadt's defeat inevitable.[19] As with the White Guards, once they had broken the main resistance, Lenin and Trotsky could snuff out the localized peasant rebellions one by one.

As professional revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks knew the value of speed and decisive action, they knew how to pacify parts of the aroused masses, and how to isolate, then subdue the remainder. During the first five or six days of the aborted revolution, the Kronstadters investigated and discussed the issues, while Zinoviev, Lenin, Trotsky and Dzerzhinsky acted quickly. There were other reasons for their failure. In 1917 the revolution was popular because it promised peace and abundance. In 1921 everyone sensed that although the rebels wanted this aim, they had to spread civil war to overthrow the Bolsheviks and the nation was exhausted. Even many of those who sympathized with the rebels supported Trotsky and Lenin because they believed such a struggle would devastate Russia to the extent where White Guard exiles could return to a walkover victory. Lenin and Trotsky harped on this point with considerable success: many members of the Workers' Opposition and the Democratic Centralism group volunteered and fought determinedly for Trotsky and Lenin at the final days of the seige - against people who they knew wanted exactly the same aims they had spent years arguing for.[20]

In the first days both the Bolsheviks and the Kronstadters tried to resolve the conflict by discussion. On March 1, a Bolshevik delegation from Petrograd led by the nominal Russian President, Kalinin, and Kuzmin, Commissar of the Baltic Fleet, were welcomed with a military band and full ceremonial honors, and the meeting was chaired by a Kronstadt official loyal to Lenin, P. Vasilev.

However, both visiting speakers had nothing to offer but a tactless mixture of harsh punishment unless they stopped their strike, and lurid portrayals of how their mutiny would lead to White Guard rule. They were booed and abused by the 15,000 strong crowd who took over the rostrum, and after denouncing the Bolsheviks and discussing their own programme, arrested Vasilev and Kuzmin, but let Kalinin free. During the eighteen days of rebellion, nearly three hundred pro-Trotsky Kronstadters were arrested and jailed, about two hundred others fled, and a large number were

left in the city undisturbed.[21] The crew of the Petropavlosk had put together a programme which the mass meeting adopted. It says a great deal about the reality of communism that such basic human rights had to be fought for in a society supposedly committed to freedom, equality and rule by the workers:

> "Resolution of the General Meeting of the 1st and 2nd Squadrons of the Baltic Fleet, held on March 1st, 1921.
>
> "After having heard the reports of the delegates sent to Petrograd by the general meeting of the crews to examine the situation, the assembly decided that, since it has been established that the present Soviets do not express the will of the workers and peasants, it is necessary:
>
> 1. to proceed immediately to the re-election of the Soviets by secret ballot, the electoral campaign among the workers and peasants to be carried on with full freedom of speech and action;
>
> 2. to establish freedom of speech and press for all workers and peasants, for the Anarchists and the Left Socialist parties;
>
> 3. to accord freedom of assembly to the workers' and peasants' organisations;
>
> 4. to convoke, outside of the political parties, a Conference of the workers, Red soldiers and sailors of Petrograd, Kronstadt and the Petrograd province for March 10th, 1921, at the latest;
>
> 5. to liberate all Socialist political prisoners and also all workers, peasants, Red soldiers and sailors, imprisoned as a result of the workers' and peasants' movements;
>
> 6. to elect a commission for the purpose of examining the cases of those who are in prisons or concentration camps;
>
> 7. to abolish the 'political offices', since no political party should have privileges for propagating its ideas or receive money from the State for this purpose, and to replace them with educational and cultural commissions elected in each locality and financed by the government;
>
> 8. to abolish immediately all barriers;
>
> 9. to make uniform the rations of all workers, except for those who are engaged in occupations dangerous to their health;

10. to abolish the Communist shock-troops in all units of the army and the Communist guards in the factories; in case of need, guard detachments could be supplied in the army by the companies and in the factories by the workers;

11. to give the peasants full freedom of action in regard to their land and also the right to possess cattle, on condition that they do their own work, that is to say, without hiring help;

12. to establish a travelling control commission;

13. to permit the free exercise of handicrafts, provided no hired help is used;

14. we ask all units of the army and the kursanti cadets to join our resolution;

15. we demand that all our resolutions be widely publicised in the press.

This resolution was adopted unanimously by the meeting of the crews of the Squadrons. Two persons abstained.

Signed: Petrichenko, president of the meeting: Perepelkin, secretary."

Lenin and Trotsky called this a "Social Revolutionary-Black Hundred" document, which is doubly ludicrous, these two groups being mortal enemies and the Black Hundreds being extinct by 1921. They were proto fascist gangs of thugs, fanatically dedicated to Czar Nicholas, and noted for their pogroms and vicious violence against liberals, trade unionists and national minorities. The Kronstadters had destroyed the Black Hundreds offices and press in 1917.[22] Even more ludicrous were Trotsky's other statements. At one point he claimed the rebellion was a selfish attempt to get "better and privileged rations". During the rebellion, Zinoviev fortified the Waldorf Astoria palace rather than surrender it to the masses, and Raskalnikov and his second wife Larissa Reissner, and other Bolshevik Kronstadters, lived in feudal luxury while he commanded Kronstadt.[23] Leading Bolsheviks Kuzmin and Rafayil also expressed their horror at enduring equal rations. Like so much of Trotsky's writings, this seems obviously guilt displacement. During the rebellion some civilian Kronstadters actually voted to reduce their meagre rations for those who needed more. In the Petropavlovsk Resolution, point nine also specifically called for equal rations. As for the other fourteen points, three, those dealing with trade barriers, free handicraft production, and the various freedoms of peasants, had little or nothing to do with Kronstadt, while of the other points, only the fourth dealt with the needs of the city, and even that was linked with the needs of Petrograd. The Resolution was obviously aimed at the whole of Russia, and was popular not

only in the Baltic area, where the Kronstadters were briefly able to distribute some copies, but as far off as Tambov Province, hundreds of miles away. There in the heartland of peasant Russia, Trotsky's troops found a copy of the Petropavlovsk Resolution framed at a church altar, with the banners of the green movement flanking it.[24]

Trotsky contradicted himself again over the Petropavlovsk Resolution and other statements made by the Kronstadters, when he said that although their documents should be evaluated, it should be in regard to an achievable reality, slogans are easy, practical realities are something else. The "parlor pinks", that is the Kronstadters and the writers who later defended them, had no achievements in reality to back their high flown concepts of socialism without a strong state ruled by a ruthless and dictatorial communist party.

He asked his 1930s critics to show "where and when their great principles were confirmed in practice, at least partially, at least in tendency".[25]

One example was in Kronstadt between the beginning of the rebellion and its destruction. The rebels allowed freedom of assembly and speech. For the last time in Russia's history, democratic elections for the soviets were held; even Communist Party members stood for election and were voted a surprising third of all delegates. There was a return to equal rations, only children and those who were ill gained a slightly better diet. Even the Bolshevik prisoners got equal rations. Kuzmin was horrified and demanded he should have his privileges; on his return to the Waldorf Astoria after the rebellion he vented his indignation about his treatment to fellow resident Victor Serge. Such aspects of Bolshevik rule as secret trials, surveillance, censorship, conscription and executions were abolished. During the seige not one communist prisoner was harmed. This could, to some extent, be a result of Trotsky's holding hostage the families of some Kronstadters, and threatening them with death if a single prisoner was harmed, but even this threat came a day after they were taken prisoner. Not only were no reds killed or tortured, but the most the Bolsheviks could accuse them of was depriving them of their shoes and coats, which were given to Kronstadters on the city walls. Prisoners were even allowed to hold political meetings and issue a newsheet.[26] Among the general population the brief new freedom generated enthusiasm and support; civilians volunteered for military service, carried out supplying the base's front lines with ammunition, took care of the wounded, and participated in the establishment of decentralized committees of various kinds. These replaced the one Bolshevik council which had previously decided all local issues in Kronstadt. The opinions of both civilians and the military were freely expressed in the city's daily newspaper 'Izvestia' which was edited by Anatolli Lamonov, the leading ideologue of the rebellion. He argued that the heroic effort of the Russian people to overthrow Czarism had been betrayed by the Communist Party

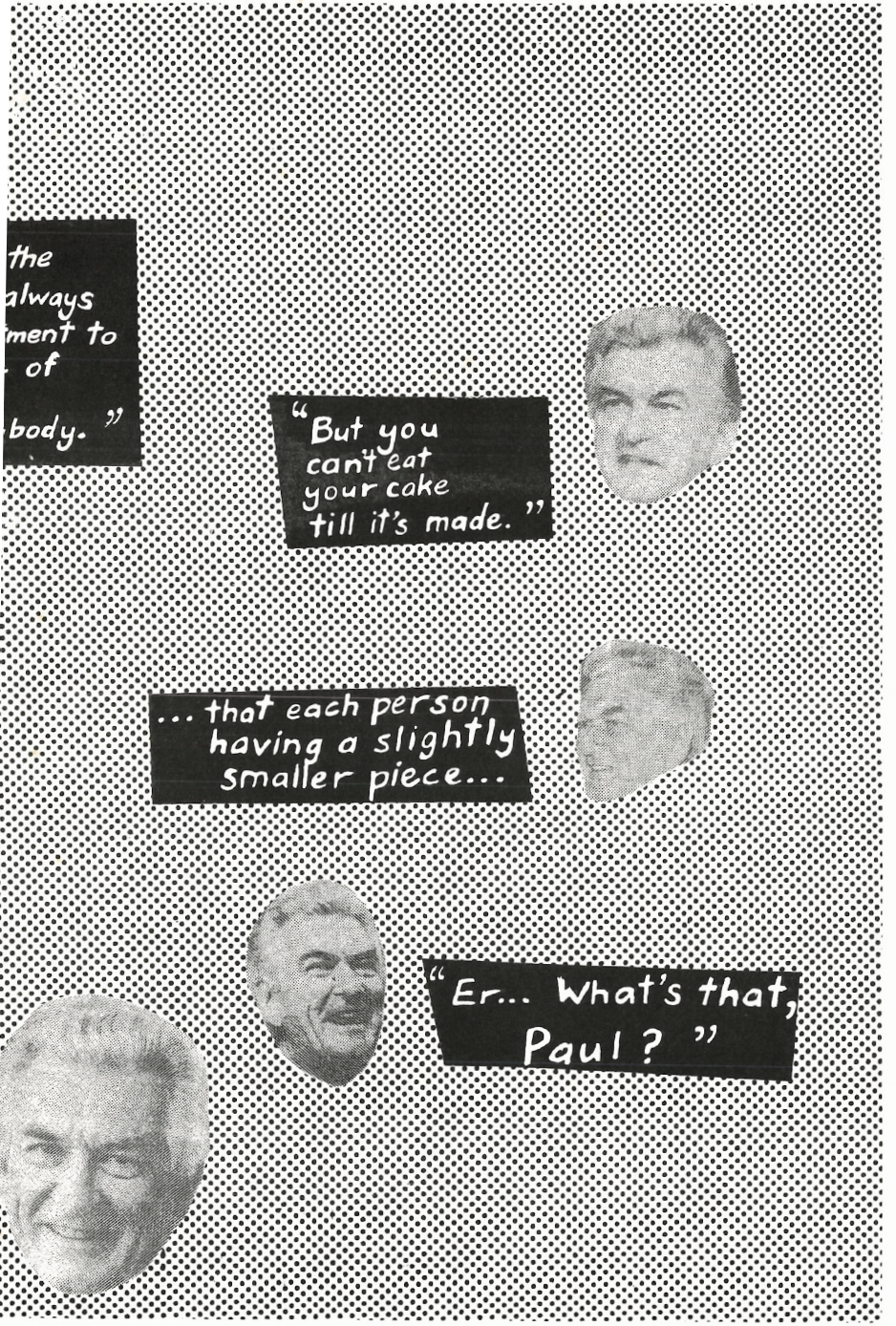
MACROECONOMICS MADE EASY

"Er... Myself & Labor Party have had a firm commit the basic principle social justice & a fair go for every

"Er... I put it to you that every thinking, responsible Australian understands that at certain points in time & given the current economic climate ...

... is the only way we can have a bigger cake."

"Paul says he prefers vanilla cream icing."


the
always
ment to
of
body."
"But you can't eat your cake till it's made."
... that each person having a slightly smaller piece...
"Er... What's that, Paul?"

which now ruled as a privileged autocracy, and so should be also overthrown. In its place, there should be the people's soviets which would abolish privilege, the tyranny of the secret police and rule by any party. 'Izvestia's pages were open to articles by the public and it would be one of the last and very few times in Russian history when the ordinary people could say what they honestly felt. Even Trotsky's proclamations were printed in a regular column entitled 'Their Lies', apparently for comic relief.

Others wrote bitter denunciations of "the new Czars" and "the commissocracy". Trotsky in particular came in for many bitter attacks because of his autocratic and cruel behavior:

> "Since, in reply to the proposition of the Kronstadt comrades to send delegates to Petrograd, Trotsky sent an aeroplane loaded with bombs which were dropped on innocent women and children, since, moreover, they are shooting honest workers everywhere, we rank-and-file Communists of the electrical crew of the Third Region, profoundly indignant at the actions of Trotsky and his agents and at their behaving like wild beasts, are leaving the Communist Party and joining all the honest workers in the common struggle for the workers' emancipation. We request that we be considered out of the party." Signed by seventeen Kronstadters.
>
> "Revolted by the behaviour of the great lord Trotsky, who did not hesitate to stain his hands with the blood of his comrade workers, I consider it my moral duty to leave the party and publish my declaration.
>
> V. Grabedeff, candidate for party membership,
> President of the Building Workers' Union"
>
> ""Field-marshal" Trotsky threatens free and revolutionary Kronstadt which has revolted against the absolutism of the Communist commissars. The workers who have overthrown the shameful yoke of the dictatorship of the Communist Party are threatened by this new kind of Trepoff with military defeat. He promises to bomb the peaceful population of Kronstadt. He repeats the order of the original Trepoff, "Do not economize on bullets." He will have to find plenty for the revolutionary sailors, workers and Red soldiers.
>
> For him, the dictator of Soviet Russia which has been violated by the Communists, the fate of the working masses means nothing. The important thing is that power should remain in the hands of his party.
>
> He has the insolence to speak in the name of Soviet Russia. He promises pardon! He, the bloody Trotsky,

> leader of the Communist cossacks who are pitilessly shedding torrents of blood for the benefit of party absolutism, he, the stifler of all free spirit, dares to use this language to the people of Kronstadt, who boldly and firmly uphold the red flag!"
>
> Anatolli Lamonov, 'Izvestia' editor.
>
> "Listen Trotsky! As long as you avoid the vengeance of the people, you can shoot innocent men by the thousand. But you cannot shoot the truth! It will come through in the end. Then you and your cossacks, you will have to pay the penalty."

So spoke those who served under him, and he would prove them correct during the Kronstadt seige. On March 5 he sent an ultimatum promising amnesty to those who surrendered. Then there was a Bolshevik offer of a negotiated settlement. The Kronstadters accepted but insisted that only 15% of those on the commission should be communists. The offer was withdrawn.

Trotsky later talked of stopping the rebellion before it caused more needless victims, and trying to suppress it with as little violence as possible. He even pitied "our blinded sailor comrades" for what he forced them to do. In reality he rushed into battle and was planning not only mass executions and heavy artillery bombardments, but aerial bombardments and strafing and the use of poison gas.[27]

Notes

1. Norman E. Saul, Sailors in Revolt. The Russian Baltic Fleet in 1917. (Lawrence; The Regent's Press of Kansas, 1978.)

2. Voline, pp. 443-445, and Mawdsley, p. 13.

3. Dybenko, Autobiographical Note circa 1925 reproduced by Haupt and Marie, pp. 122-123.

4. Raskalnikov, pp. 1-13, pp. 32-34, pp. 91-106.

5. Mawdsley, pp. 168-169.

6. Raskalnikov, p. 34 and p. 167. Trotsky, A History of the Russian Revolution. Vol. I, p. 439, and a speech of May 14, 1917 quoted by Mawdsley, p. 77. See also a speech by Trotsky in October 1919 quoted by Israel Getzler in Kronstadt 1917-1921, p. 195, and Paul Avrich, Kronstadt 1921. (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1970.) p.

7. Deutscher, The Prophet Armed. p. 512.

8. Mawdsley, Appendix I, pp. 157-159.

9. Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution Vol.1 pp. 438-441, and Voline, p. 443, and Raskalnikov, pp. 36-44.

10. Pravda, February 12, 1921, quoted by Avrich, Op. Cit. p. 37.

11. Voline, pp. 463-465.

12. Getzler, Op. Cit. pp. 198-200.

13. See footnote 3 and also Arshinov, p. 94 and p. 235, and Lockhart, p. 301-302.

14. Getzler, p. 205, p. 211.

15. Lenin, see in particular footnotes 19-22, Chapter 3, and also his Letter to Comrade Miasnikov, August 5, 1921, Vol. 32, pp. 504-509, and to Kamenev and Stalin, February 21, 1922, Vol. 45, pp. 479-480. Both letters are in The Collected Works. See also Lenin's Speech at the Ninth Party Congress, March 29, 1920, and Decree of the Council of Labor and Defence, April 21, 1920, both reproduced by James Bunyan. The Origins of Forced Labor in the _____ Materials,

16. Goldman, Living My Life, _____. p. 880.

17. Ser _____ Revolutionary, pp. 125-126, and Berkman, _____ Myth,

18. H.G. Wells, _____. (1921 rpt: Westport; Hyperion Press Inc., 1973.) p. 25.

19. My account of the Petrograd riots is based on the following eyewitness sources:

Alex Berkman, The Russian Tragedy. (1922 rpt: Sanday Cienfuegos Press, 1976.) section "The Kronstadt Tragedy", pp. 71-94.

----------, The Bolshevik Myth, pp. 291-301.

V. Serge, Memc _____ Revolutionary, pp. 124-129.

Emma Goldman, My _____ Russia, pp. 195-198.
Living My _____ 372-886.

Lenin and Trotsky, _____. (New York; Pathfinder Press, 1979.) A collection of articles by Lenin, Trotsky, John C. Wright, Serge, Dwight MacDonald and Pierre Frank. The statements and ultimatums of Trotsky and Lenin on pages 41-42, pp. 65-66 are

particularly related to the Petrograd events. See also The Trotsky Papers, Vol. 2, documents 663, 668 and 675, pp. 391-393, p. 401 and p. 415.

"Izvestia O Kronstadt", Issues 1-14 (Kronstadt, March 3-16, 1921.) Edited by Anatolli Lamonov, this was the paper of the Kronstadters and contained several references to events in Petrograd. It was reprinted in Prague in 1922.

Yarchuk, Voline, Anton Ciliga, Alex Barmine, Maximoff, Pestana, and Rocker were also in Russia at the time or soon after and gave similar accounts of the Petrograd events.

See also Avrich's Kronstadt 1921, pp. 35-51, and Ida Mett's The Kronstadt Uprising. (1938 rpt: Montreal; Black Rose Books, 1973.) pp. 35-54.

20. Serge, Op. Cit. pp. 128-133, Rosmer, pp. 120-122, Barmine, One Who Survived, p. 95, Avrich, Kronstadt, 1921, pp. 182-183.

21. Berkman, The Kronstadt Tragedy, pp. 104-108, Serge, Op. Cit., "Izvestia O Kronstadt", No. 2, March 3, 1921, 'Declaration of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee'. See also the account of a Bolshevik prisoner, M. Rafayil, 'The Kronstadt Rebellion', written in 1921. Maximoff reproduces some sections in The Guillotine at Work, Vol. I, pp. 165-167. Professor Getzler quotes other sources - Social Revolutionary, Bolshevik, and Kronstadter, and comes to the same conclusions. See Kronstadt 1917-1921, pp. 240-241.

22. Official Government Statement signed by Lenin and Trotsky and printed in 'Pravda', March 2, 1921, reproduced in Kronstadt, p. 65. See also Getzler, p. 57.

23. Trotsky, 'The Questions of Wedlin Thomas', July 6, 1937, reproduced in full in Kronstadt, p. 79, and Getzler, p. 210.

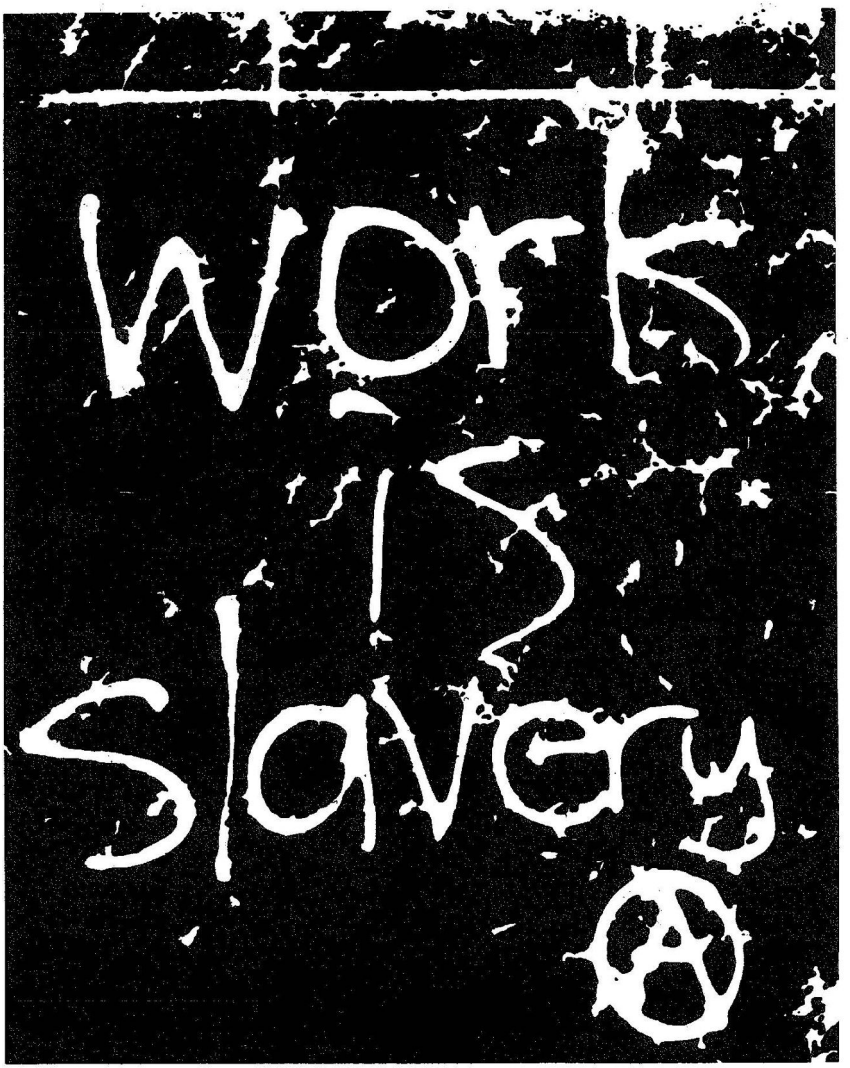
24. Radkey, p. 164, p. 303.

25. Trotsky, 'Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt', January 15, 1938, reproduced in full in Kronstadt, p. 91-94.

26. Apart from Serge and "Izvestia O Kronstadt", my main sources here are previously cited works by Mett, pp. 41-45, pp. 48-51; Getzler, pp. 222-224, pp. 227-231; and Anton Ciliga's The Kronstadt Revolt, pp. 13-15. This is a full reproduction of the 1942 edition which was part of a collection of materials about the rebellion published in 'Anarchy', Vol. 1, No. 2, April 1971. Yarchuk, Voline and Berkman also state that the Kronstadt commune achieved many of its professed aims.

27. These thoughts are contained in three articles by Trotsky reproduced in Kronstadt. See:

'Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt' (1938), p. 92.
'A Tragic Necessity' (1940), p. 97.
'In Honor of the Heroes of Kronstadt' (1921), p. 74.
and Avrich, Op. Cit., pp. 211-212.



MATERIALISM AND SLAVERY

Engels and his very scientific disciples have denounced the Materialism of naturalists as *vulgar*, that is to say, all inductive science itself. Does there, then, exist another kind of Materialism for the use of the elect and privileged? It seems there exists a dialectic Materialism invented by them, and this Materialism has nothing in common with that of naturalists.

Dialectic Materialism! What a monstrosity! and what may we not expect from such a mixture? Dialectic is proper to metaphysics, and has no connection with science, whereas Materialism, in our times, is inductive science itself. It is the general basis of all *positive* knowledge, of all present evolutionist philosophy, and there exists no *science*, save the sophistic medley known by the name of Social Democracy, that is not based on the *vulgar* Materialism of naturalists. I shall remind the sophists of Engels's school what Marx said on this subject in 1845:

"Materialism is the child of England. . . . * The true *founder of the Materialism and inductive science* of modern times *is Bacon*. For him science consists solely of the natural sciences. . . . Science is experience. . . . Induction, analysis, observation are the principal elements of the rational method. Movement is the inseparable property of matter . . . and the force that creates even animated beings. . . . You cannot separate the idea of movement from matter which engenders it. . . . Man is subject to the same laws as nature."

Speaking of the influence of materialist and sensationalist English philosophy in France, Marx says: "The need of a positive and anti-metaphysical system was felt in that country. . . . Locke's work appeared at the right time."

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* See his article on French materialism (1845) reproduced by *Die Neue Zeit*.

How is it, I ask Engels's disciples again, that Bacon and Locke, the "founders of Materialism, of inductive science and the anti-metaphysical system," are called by Engels founders of metaphysics? And how do they dare to tell workers that they "created narrowness in the ideas of the last two centuries . . . metaphysical reasoning"? that there exists a Materialism other than that of the natural sciences? And by what right do these pupils of Hegel's metaphysical and reactionary school attribute to themselves the invention of Materialism, while combating the true Materialism of naturalists? How can they tell workers that the economic explanation of history (see Chapter XIX.), elaborated by all science, was discovered by them, and that just this discovery is true Materialism?

In spite of their scientific pretensions, I believe that Engels and his disciples have chiefly acted out of ignorance. Let them, therefore, listen to what a great German naturalist says on the Materialism of "vulgar" inductive sciences. Perhaps they will learn that Bacon's and Locke's ideas, adopted by Marx when neither he nor Engels aspired to an international dictatorship, that these ideas enriched and developed, constitute the basis of all contemporary science and philosophy.

Our conception of Monism, or the unity-philosophy," says Häckel,* "on the contrary, is clear and unambiguous: for an immaterial living spirit is just as unthinkable as a dead, spiritless material; the two are inseparably combined in every atom . . . for according to our monistic conception, energy and matter are inseparable, being only different inalienable manifestations of one single universal being—substance. . . . These fixed groups of primitive atoms are the atoms of the elements—the well-known 'indivisible' atoms of chemistry. . . . Thus, for example, the atom of carbon (the real 'maker' of the organic world) is in all probability a tetrahedron made up of four primitive atoms. . . . After the glowing sphere of the earth had cooled down to a certain degree (according to Laplace's hypothesis) drops of fluid water precipitated themselves on the hardened crust of its surface—the first preliminary condition of organic life. Carbon atoms begin their organism-engendering activity, and unite with the other elements into plasma-combinations capable of growing. . . . The history of descent now leads us on step by step from the oldest Metazoa, the simplest pluricellular animals, up to man. . . . Our human body has been built up slowly and by degrees from a long series of vertebrate ancestors, and this is also true of our soul: as a function of our brain it has gradually been developed in recip-

* "Monism," an address delivered on October 9, 1892, at Altenburg. London, 1895, Black.

rocal action and re-action with this, its bodily organ. What we briefly designate as the "human soul" is only the sum of our feeling, willing, and thinking—the sum of those physiological functions whose elementary organs are constituted by the microscopic ganglion cells of our brain. . . . Comparative psychology teaches us how, hand in hand therewith, the soul itself, as function of the brain, has been developed. The last-named science teaches us also that a primitive form of soul activity is already present even in the lowest animals, the single-celled primitive animals, Infusoria and Rhizopoda. Every scientific man who has long observed the life activity of these single-celled Protista, is positively convinced that they also possess a soul: that this 'cell-soul' also consists of a sum of sensations, perceptions, and volitions: the feeling, thinking, and willing of our human soul differ from these only in degree. . . . We now definitely know that the organic world of our earth has been as continuously developed, 'in accordance with eternal iron laws,' as Lyell had in 1830 shown to be the case for the inorganic frame of the earth itself; we know that the innumerable varieties of animals and plants which during the course of millions of years have peopled our planet are all simply branches of one single genealogical tree; we know that the human race itself forms only one of the newest, highest, and most perfect offshoots from the race of the Vertebrates."

Speaking of human morality, Häckel says: "'Do to others as you would they should do to you.' This natural and highest command had been taught and followed thousands of years before Christ said: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' In the human family this maxim has always been accepted as self-evident; as ethical instinct it was an inheritance derived from our animal ancestors. It had already found a place among the herds of apes and other social mammals."

Animal-man, man produced by organic evolution from the moral and physiological point of view, is the basis of science nowadays. All men of science, even fervent Catholics, like Secchi and Moigno, have adopted the doctrine in about the same terms as Häckel. . . . In fact, nowadays, nobody talks of Materialism as of a doctrine apart. I repeat,

Materialism has become synonymous with science. At the time of the Encyclopedists, when science was invaded by theology and metaphysics, or at the beginning of the century, when the doctrine of cataclysms dominated in geology, and Cuvier disowned the doctrine of Lamarck and Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire, at that time the controversy about Materialism was of great importance. But for fifty years, to call yourself Materialist signifies simply not to be an ignoramus that denies science, not to be a theologian, a talmudist, a metaphysician, or a Social Democrat. As for Engels, who was beginning to emancipate himself from the absurdity of metaphysics, under the influence of Feuerbach, scientific doctrines must have appeared a kind of revelation to him. But he had no grounds for attributing to Marx and to himself the invention of these elementary truths of modern science.

And I have my doubts that Engels ever completely emancipated himself from metaphysics. He shows himself neither materialistic nor scientific in his polemics with Dühring, when he entirely denies the influence of force in history, or when he glorifies slavery as a boon to mankind.

"In general," we read in Engels, "private property was not the result of pillage or violence . . . it was brought about by economic causes. Violence plays no part in its creation. . . . The whole history of the origin of private property is based exclusively on economic causes, and to explain it, it is not necessary to refer to violence, to pillage, to the State,* or to any other political intervention. . . . Property must be created by work before it can be appropriated by force. . . . Before slavery became possible, production and inequality of distribution must have already existed."

No violence, no State or forcible intervention. . . . It is production itself that engenders inequality, oppression, slavery. . . . If it is so, what an abomination, a curse to humanity must be production and work, that are only sources of social iniquities!

But what, may I ask, was the theory primitive men depended on? What capital did they need when killing one another to regale themselves on human flesh?

Engels, as a true sophist, triumphantly teaches Dühring that Robinson Crusoe captured Friday, because Robinson was a representative of high culture and was the better armed. "Producers supplied with the better weapons always triumphed over inferior producers," he adds. But Robinson saved Friday from the not very pleasant prospect of being eaten by his noble fellow citizens. These latter had triumphed over Friday

* Why then wish to conquer the State?

before Robinson. Had they triumphed by their superior education or by force? Did Menelik and the Abyssinians beat the Italians because they are more advanced in civilization and in methods of production, or because they were stronger? And did barbarians destroy Græco-Roman civilization because they were more developed, more industrious, and more civilized? No, it was force, brutality, violence, that triumphed.

Where did Engels find his pernicious doctrine that legalizes oppression and slavery? He has many times said that he expressed Marx's ideas. But the latter never denied the part played by force and violence, neither in economical nor in political life. ". . . The unity of great nations has been *created by violence*, and in our times it has become a powerful factor of social production." (Marx, "Civil War in France in 1870-71.")

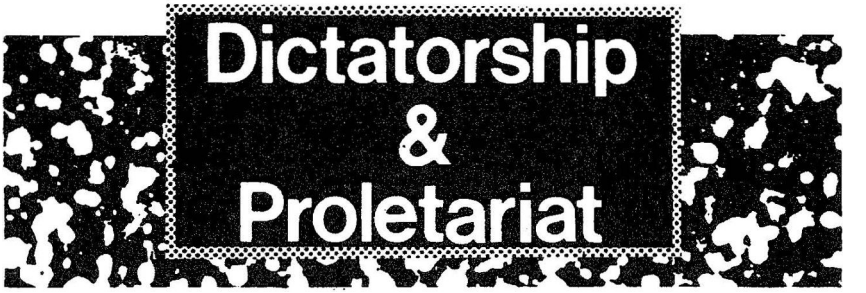
Who is right,—Marx, admitting, according to history, the part played by violence, or Engels, preaching to workers that they are exploited and oppressed according to their own slavish good will?

And on what does he base himself when he teaches that without slavery, ancient Greece and its arts and sciences could not have been developed: or that slavery at that time was a great step towards progress? If slavery was a progressive factor in history, why did the same Greece fall into a barbarous state under Turkish rule? Slavery flourished in those parts till the beginning of our century. How did it happen that during twenty centuries, the same nation with the same slavery, instead of continuing its incomparable civilization, fell more and more into a savage state?

I know of no such example given in any literature except among the upholders of slavery. The apologists of Despotism and slavery say, at least, that they are the representatives of armed power and that the people, the rabble, must obey them. But here is the leader of scientific Socialism who tells workers that their fathers submitted voluntarily to the rich, that force was not necessary to bring them to sell themselves and their children, and that they pushed cowardice so far as voluntarily to cede to the rich the right of the first wedding night!

Nobody has ever outraged the proletariat in such a way. To put forward such an assertion, a man must be a confirmed sophist, but no scientist. Poor Science, what stupidities and monstrosities Engels preached in your name!

And they try to impose all this mass of obscurities and brutishness as scientific Socialism on German workers. But the German workmen are too intelligent, too kind, too frank-hearted, to remain under the influence of such a doctrine for long. And we already feel the signs of approaching revolts.



Marx expected, immediately after the revolution, that there would be a transitional period; the dictatorship of the proletariat. The forms he thought this 'dictatorship' might take were influenced by his knowledge of the Paris Commune of 1871. Engels was later explicitly to identify the two; "Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat". (Engels, Introduction to The Civil War in France.) Because it occupies this important position, it is worth quoting at some length Marx's observations on the Commune. Note first that whereas earlier revolutions had strengthened the state, the Commune "was a Revolution against the State itself, that supernaturalist abortion of society". (Marx, The Civil War in France.)

> The Commune was formed by the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men or acknowledged representatives of the working class ... . From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workman's wages. (Marx, The Civil War in France.)

Marx envisioned this system as extended over all of France. Even the "smallest country hamlet" will be a commune, apparently in voluntary confederation with others. However, the:

> ... unity of the country was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organized by the Communal Constitution and to become a reality by the destruction of the state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity, independent of and superior to the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence. (Marx, The Civil War in France.)

Where the transitional period is characterized by direct democracy, there can be little function for the centralised state. A society involving the direct participation of the great majority could have small need of oppression. There is no conflict here of means and ends. Marx always held that "the emancipation of the proletariat must be the work of the proletariat itself" not

of professional revolutionary cliques or governments determining the true interests of the workers. This is borne out by Engels' letter of 1891 which, according to Przeworski, "was to meet with Lenin's acute displeasure". (Przeworski, Democracy Social Phenomenon.)

> If one thing is certain it is that our Party and the working class can only come to power under the form of a democratic republic. This is even the specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Since 1871 there have been several other cases of the similar spontaneous appearance of proletarian organizations, more or less resembling the Paris Commune in structure, in the immediate aftermath of revolutions. They have appeared in the form of the soviets in the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, as the German Workers' Councils of 1917-18, the insurrectionary factory councils of 1920, that were to have so important an influence on Gramsci's thought, in the Spanish Revolution of 1936 and, more recently, in Hungary and Poland in the 1950's.

These revolutionary councils have never endured long, though it is at least arguable that some had a fighting chance. They have usually succumbed to force rather than have collapsed through inefficiency, indeed their achievements have often been considerable However, even if we consider revolutionary situations to be a thing of the past in European society, the revolutionary councils retain a considerable theoretical importance. This is because these remain the best empirical examples of the workers managing not only industry, but the whole of society, themselves. General arguments from human nature against the possibility of socialism may be refuted by reference to the many primitive and peasant economies which have no private property or separate organs of government. But many people, otherwise sympathetic, find it impossible to conceive of large complex industries and public administration being run without central management. For lack of space I shall limit myself here to a brief account of two instances; the Rusian soviets and the revolutionary trade unions in the Spanish Civil War.

THE RUSSIAN SOVIETS

The soviets, elected representative bodies of workers and soldiers, first apeared in the revolution of 1905. The St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies became for a time a national centre of political power. In February 1917, the soviets re-appeared, forming a loose-knit, nation-wide organization. After the October Revolution they were transformed into organs of state and retained some of these functions until the summer of 1918.

The Bolsheviks had never had a mass following in Russia; the majority commemorated in their name referred to the expatriate London-Brussels Congress of 1903. They sought power with a proclaimed policy of "All Power to the Soviets". Lenin was particularly enthusiastic, emphasising the similarities of the soviets to the Paris Commune.

> ... direct power of the armed and organized workers. That is the state we need. In their essence the Commune of 1871 and the soviets of workers' deputies in 1905 and 1917 are just such a state.

He expresses himself at this time as in favour of a thoroughgoing democracy, rather at odds with his earlier proposals in What is to be Done?.

> The transition from capitalism to socialism is impossible without some reversion to primitive democracy (how else can the majority and even the whole population, proceed to discharge state functions?).
>
> All officials without exception, elected and subject to recall at any time, their salaries reduced to workmen's wages - these simple and self-evident democratic measures, while completely uniting the interests of the workers and the majority of peasants, at the same time serve as the bridge between capitalism and socialism. (Lenin, State and Revolution.)

The Bolsheviks succeeded in gaining the support of many of the soviets, especially in the cities. Lichtheim quotes Braunthal to this effect.

> The Bolshevik conquest of the Moscow and the St. Petersburg soviets in the election of September 1917 enabled Lenin to overcome the desperate resistance within his own party against the idea of an armed uprising. And it was only the control over the St. Petersburg Soviet which gave Trotsky the military instrument necessary to carry through the coup d'etat. (Lichtheim, Short History of Socialism.)

In the immediate post-revolutionary period industry and much of the administration, both civil and military, was controlled by the soviets, which had developed of themselves, without being instituted by any of the political parties. By the decree of June 1918 industry was nationalized and all power taken from the soviets. Proposals for workers' control were rejected in favour of state control using professional managers. On the Cent Committee, Kollontai and Shylapnikov protested, wanting workers' control; Trotsky and Bukharin pressed for the soviets to retain some representation in the government; Lenin, Stalin and Zinoviev opted for centralised control, professional managers and the reduc-

tion of the soviets to a minimal trade-union function. Many of the worst methods of alienation in capitalism were now to be studied and emulated in the interests of higher production.

> The possibility of building socialism depends precisely on our success in combining the soviet Power and the Soviet organization of Industry with the up to date achievements of capitalism. We must organize in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system, and systematically try it out and adapt it to our ends. (Lenin, The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government. 1918)

This was to become the Stakhanovite system.

This period also saw the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the Left Social Revolutionaries resigning in protest from the Council of the People's Commission, the Workers' Opposition and henceforth all factions within the Party proscribed, the Mensheviks suppressed and their leaders exiled.

Not all soviets accepted their dissolution without protest. The final showdown was Trotsky's savage suppression of the Krondstadt uprising of 1921. The sailors and workers of Krondstadt, together with the workers of St. Petersburg issued demand for the restoration of power to the soviets and factory committees, for freedom of speech and the press, and the release from prison of working class revolutionaries. They objected too, to Trotsky's 'labour battalions'; strike breakers from the Red Army. Thousands of workers came out on strike in support of these demands, publicised in the Izvestia of the Krondstadt Revolutionary Committee, March 6,1921:

> Our cause is just. We are for the power of the soviets and not that of the parties. We are for the free election of the representatives of the working masses. The false soviets, monopolised and manipulated by the Communist Party, have always been deaf to our needs and requests; the only response we have received has been the assassin's bullet.

On February 24 Zinoviev sent military detachments to take over Krondstadt. These were repulsed and on March 7 Trotsky followed up with an infantry attack. Many soldiers refused to march and others joined the insurgents. The St. Petersburg proletariat came out in a general strike which spread to factories in Moscow and Novgorod. On March 8 the shelling and aerial bombardment of Krondstadt was commenced. The Red Army was reorganized; those soldiers who had shown sympathy to the insurgents being punished by a 'Revolutionary Tribunal'. Then the final assault was launched, under Trotsky's orders, under the command of the ex-tsarist officer Tukachevsky, with specially chosen 'reliable' troops. The rising was finally suppressed on March 18, 1921. (Voline, The U n Revolution.)

THE SPANISH SYNDICATES

In July, 1936, Franco and three other phalangist generals rose in a military coup to overthrow the elected government of Spain. The government dithered and refused demands to arm the people. On the night of July 18 the Confederacion Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT), the largest trade union organization, took matters into its own hands, with an announcement over Madrid radio of the revolutionary general strike. In Barcelona the workers attacked the barracks and seized the armaments.

> In 1936, the anarchists, who over the years had become expert guerillas, were mainly responsible for the defeat of the rebel generals in both Barcelona and Valencia as well as the country areas of Catalonia and Aragon. They were in virtual control of eastern Spain. The factories and workshops were taken over by workers' committees and in hundreds of villages in Catalonia, Levante and Andalusia the peasants seized the land. (Woodcock, Anarchism.)

The Spanish Revolutionary Councils differed from the Russian soviets and the Paris Commune in the important respect that they were not entirely a spontaneous reaction to the revolutionary situation. The CNT was a syndicalist organization and had intended from its inception to develop within the workers' organizations the structure of a future society. Another important difference was that the CNT itself and the enterprises it took over were led by direct participation - the Commune and the Soviets were representational bodies.

> t of combat, it is the living germ of the future ty, and the society of the future will be what we have made of the syndicate. Syndicalism does not waste time promising the workers a paradise on earth, it calls on them to conquer it and assures them that their action will never be wholly in vain.
> ed in Lichtheim, History

The CNT unions, and also those of the other large workers organization the UGT (Union General de Trabajadores), were industrial unions with a commune base in the local community and serv various social and community, as well as trade union, functions. They maintained in each district or village a Casa del Pueblo (House of the People) which combined union meeting rooms with a cafe, library and workers educational organizations. All workers in all trades within a locality belonged to the union. The national committee was elected each year from a different locality to ensure that no individual served more than one term. All delegates were subject to immediate recall.

This enormous organization, which claimed 700,000 members in 1919, 1,600,000 in 1936 and more than 2,000,000 during the civil war, employed only one paid secretary. Its day-to-day work was carried on in their spare time by workers chosen by their fellows. (Woodcock, Anarchism.)

Catalonia is the industrial area of Spain and Barcelona the greatest industrial city. By one of the ironies of history Engels, arguing the necessity of a transitional period, had taunted the anarchists - "Go and run one of the big Barcelona factories without direction, that is, without authority!" (Engels, Anarcho-Syndicalism.)

Barcelona, as well as the surrounding country and villages, was entirely controlled by the workers in a state of complete industrial democracy for a period of several months. Many foreign observers, attracted to Spain by the Civil War, have testified to the success of the workers in maintaining and in some cases in increasing the levels of production, and also to the maintenance of the public services; the water, electricity, gas, telephone and transport systems of Barcelona. And this was in the face of civil war, a lack of raw materials and the absence of most of the able-bodied men at the front. This is the best historical evidence we have

to date of the capacity of the proletariat directly to control industry and city administration and, in this instance, without any gradual period of transition.

to tl credit of the USSR that, apart from Mexico, it was only ɔreign power willing to sell arms to the Spanish 'loyalists'. Th capitalist powers had, of course, no interest in supporting Spa ıish revolutionaries. Unfortunately, the ⁻ɔmmunist Part; too, str(ngly opposed any workers' movement ı ınder its own (ntrol.

> The general swing to the right dates from about October-November, 1936, when the USSR began to supply arms to the government ... . Consequently the Russians were in a position to dictate terms. There is very little doubt that these terms were, in substance,'Prevent revolution or you get no arms'. (Orwell, Homage to Catalonia.)

> Communi rong stand against such factories as d pass(l under workers' control, chiefly workers o ınized ı the CNT, even using their influence to revent such factories from getting supplies of mater ial in order to compel them to place themselves ur official cont (Cole, Socialist Thought.)

Finally, Barcelona was attacked. Communist troops being taken from the front for this purpose and non-Catalonian police and military employed. There was a great battle over control of the telephone exchange. Abroad, the Communist press denied that there was a revolutionary situation in Spain. Orwell's disillusion with th left and his conviction of its intellectual and political dishonesty date from his experiences in Spain.

> I saw great battles reported where there had been no fighting and complete silence where hundreds of men had been killed. I saw troops who had fought bravely denounced as cowards and traitors and others who had never seen a shot fired hailed as heroes of imaginary victories. (Orwell, Homage to Catalonia.)

He bcame convinced that "the very concept of objective truth is fading from the world". (Ibid)

And so were the first working-class societies destroyed as they emerged. Marx had shown a keen historical prescience in realizing the significance inherent in the Paris Commune. The identification of this spontaneous force proved the most accurate of his historical predictions. By a strange irony the most active part in consigning these actual 'dictatorships of the proletariat' to oblivion was to be taken by a self-proclaimed 'soviet' State and a Communist Party, both proselytizing Marxism.

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL, A TOOL OF THE BOLSHEVIC POLITICAL STATE

We are not alone in viewing things in Russia as we have described them. To the extent that the leaders of the various communist parties are not gramophone copies of the dictators of Moscow and have maintained personal judgement to a certain degree they know the situation in the Soviet Union quite well. Unfortunately, most of them being sympathizers, they lack the moral courage to publicly state the truth.

It is a well known fact that the Italian Socialist Party was the first to make an unconditional homage to Bolshevism. Its main organ Avanti has glorified Lenin in most emphatic terms and the Party has unanimously declared itself pro-Moscow. But after some Italian delegates returned from Russia some rumours circulated secretly indicating that, after having personally seen the "communist" heaven, the delegates had lost their enthusiasm. Naturally nothing has been publicly said and the socialist press continues to thunder praise of Bolshevism. Nevertheless, some details of what some of them have seen and learnt in Russia have slowly leaked out and have reached, and have been revealed by, the bourgeois press. Above all it was these leaks to the bourgeois press that led the men of Moscow to demand a complete "Purge" in the Italian Party. It was during these brotherly quarrels that Serrati, the editor of Avanti, and one of the most well-known personalities in Moscow and the Third International, gave Lenin the following characteristic reply:

I have no intention to enter a polemic with you over your suggestion that the old leaders in all proletarian, not only political but also syndicalist, co-operative and cultural, etc. organizations be replaced by new, all communist ones. What I am saying is that there is a real difficulty in realizing such action in Italy where we lack appropriate people. It is possible that the new comers may introduce themselves as the most radical communists, but only in order to take over leading positions. This is a serious danger which you know well, because this is one of the most tragic things that overwhelmed your republic. After the October Revolution the members of your party grew tenfold, but you did not gain much despite strict discipline and periodic purges. All the flunkeys joined you because you were strong. Despite all that the revolution has succeeded but it must be recognized that those, who can be called the swindlers of the revolution, are guilty of those faults and did commit these contemptible actions. It is they who founded the stupid and terrible bureaucracy and they who try to create, for profit to themselves, new privileges in the Soviet Republic whereas the masses of workers and peasants, patient and resigned, carry all the weight of the Revolution and oppose all privileges. These are the new-comers, the revolutionaries of yesterday,who exaggerating everything, have spread the terror to make it a means to achieve their ends. It is they who, over the suffering of the masses, have reduced the proletarian revolution to a weapon of their pleasure and domination. From now on learning from your and our experiences we have to look twice before we accept,as the most pure pearl, one who introduces himself as a freshly baked communist and entrust him with the direction of our government and, more so, if yesterday, he was a supporter of the war, of the Holy Alliance and a member of the government.

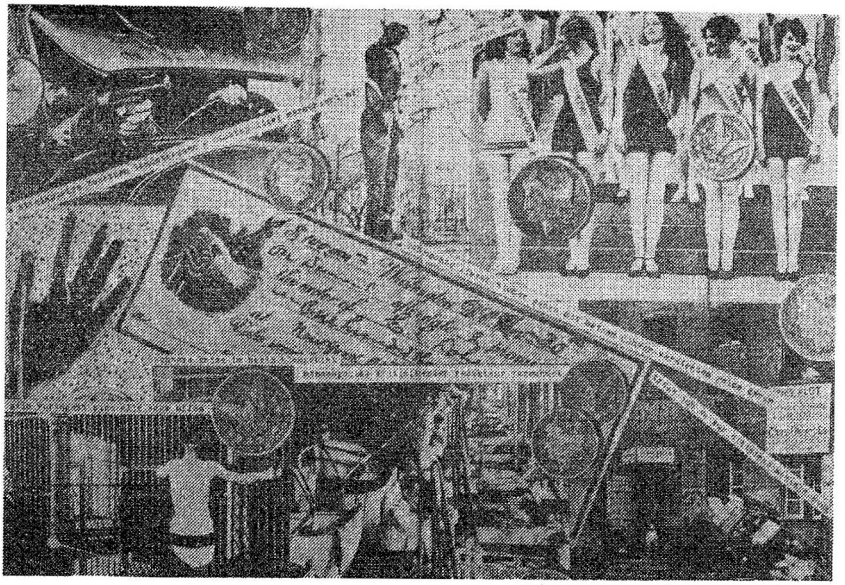
WHEN THE EYES WILL BE OPENED

These few lines of Serrati are important from several points of views. They indicate first of all that within the communist milieu - Serrati then was a convinced supporter of Moscow-, they never cherished illusions about the true state of affairs in Russia. That people kept silent about the happenings or, worse, continued, inspite of their knowledge and consciousness, to report them differently

whereas they knew that they contradicted the truth completely is, in our opinion, the biggest crime perpetuated, at any time, against the working class. Many committed this because of moral cowardice, fearful of being suspected of "counter-revolutionary" crimes. Naturally, this does not prevent precisely those people from throwing heaviest paving stones at the Bolsheviks when the time arrives. But for others it was a result of cold calculation and secret diplomacy in the interest of the "raison de Parti".

Naturally Serrati has been anathematized and treated as a "counter-revolutionary". Nevertheless, one gets used to such events and does not take them too seriously because today it is well acknowledged that praise and blame and the rest are subservient to Moscow's supplies and demands. Take the case of Ernst Dauming in Germany. Lenin personally adjudicated him a "coward petty-bourgeois" and "reactionary" but since he has joined the Communist Party, despite the good qualities attributed to him by Lenin, all is changed and he is elected as a member of the Central Committee.

But Serrati has touched here on a highly important point, namely the influence of Bolshevism on the international workers' movement. In forming the Third International the Soviet Government furnished itself with an instrument destined to promote, in the working class of the various countries, the rules of its policies. Nobody, at the beginning, could clearly see the real aims and activities of this organization. The bankruptcy of the Second International at the outbreak of the First World War, and the strong influence of the Russian Revolution on the workers of the whole world, had awakened in the proletariat a desire for a new international association; a desire all the more strong because the general situation created by the war was very revolutionary. Thus, the creation of the Third International was greeted ethusiastically. And because nobody, at the beginning, as has been mentioned before, had a clear idea of the aims and the methods of this new organization, it should not be surprising that all socialist tendencies declared themselves ready to join it. Thus quite moderate tendencies, such as the Spanish Socialist Party and The English Independent Labour Party, were taken by the general atmosphere and publicly demonstrated their sympathies and syndicalist organizations, even anarchists ones, went with the current and announced their adherence. And yet one would have thought that the latter would have been more reserved.



THE ROLE OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

As usual our old friend and militant, Enrico Malatesta, has at once rightly captured the substance of the affair when he wrote in Umanita Nova the following lines, worthy of consideration:

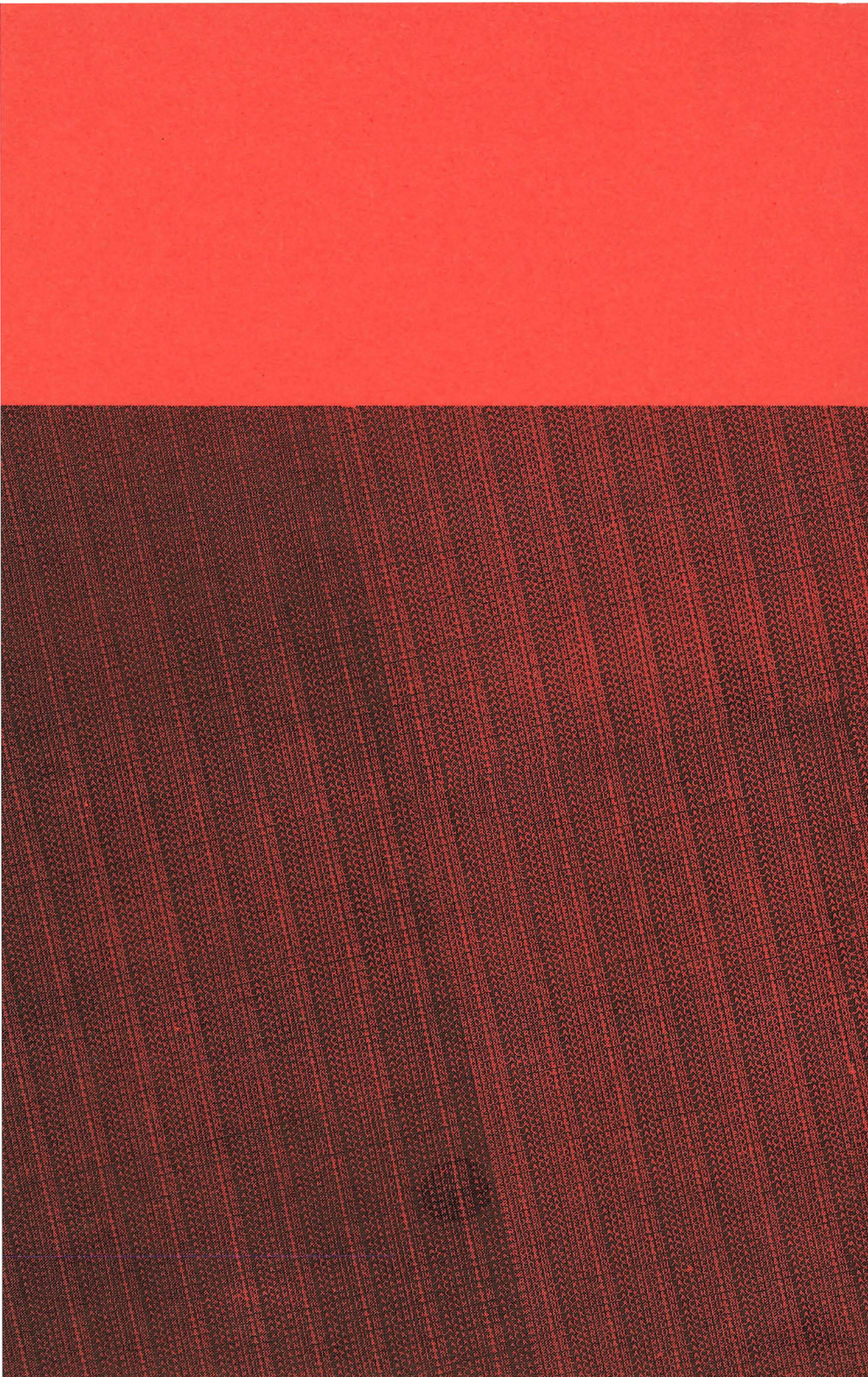
> What kind of Association is, therefore, this Third International whose existence appears to us very mystical and which, at the moment, owes its prestige to the fact that it comes from Russia, a country which, if indeed, it is in a state of revolution is no less enveloped in clouds of legend. Has it had, until now, an exact programme acceptable to all tendencies looking to associate themselves with it? Well, is not its programme going to be presented, debated and formulated at the first congress? And if this is the case what position is the congress going to adopt? Will it be ready to receive delegates from all organizations and workers' parties and guarantee to all the same rights? In particular will it invite the anarchists and allow them to participate in its works? If the Third International is only an organization modelled on the socialist parties whose aim is to capture political power and establish a would-be "dictatorship of the proletariat", thus building an authoritarian communist state then, obviously, we

will have nothing to do with it. A real international of the working people would unite all workers who have become aw of their class interests, ll workers bent under the yoke of exploitation and who want to get rid of it, all workers ready to fight capitalism utilizing in this struggle the means most appropriate to each tendency. All anarchists, socialists, and syndicalists can come together in such an international without any of them renouncing their proper aims and means. In it they will find a terrain to make their own propaganda and , at the same time, a strong lever to push the masses to a decisive battle. It is this hour that we are waiting for with hope.

Today we are completely aware of the aims and the tendencies of the Third International and experience shows us that Malatesta was right to recommend to our comrades a bit more reflection before making a decision.

The well known and infamous 21 points of the second congress ought to have opened the eyes of those who had not lost the ability to think. That centralism pushed to its extreme is a negation of all liberties, the suppression of any personal initiative and the degrading of the workers' movement to a herd of sheep blindly complying with instructions from above. Exactly as every independent movement in Russia was strangled in its inception and the opposition silenced by submachine guns and convict-prisons, so they are now trying to force the totality of the international labour movement to go through the Caudinian fork. The success of this attempt will spell the end of every authentic socialist movement, a petrification without hope of ideas and the death of all deeds susceptible to development and to all forms of life. The Roman Catholic Church has never dared to "grant" to its faithfuls a code wherein the absence of liberty and the presence of spiritual servitude are erected as principles, such as is embodied in these infamous 21 points. The idea of subordinating a movement in every country, dependent on the particular conditions in each of them, to the power and the rigid orders of a head-office in Moscow is in itself a monstrosity which can only the outcome of a brain possessed by the fixed idea of directing people according to its own pleasure, like characters in a puppet theatre. In fact a grandiose idea which would be an honour to a Ludendorff.

The most outrageous was the attempt to incorporate these insane principles into practical reality. The bloody tragedy, so disastrous for the German working class in

their "March upheaval", was a result of this fatal policy. They pushed the workers of Central Germany towards this movement, whilst believing at the same time that it would all inevitably finish in a terrible fiasco because there did not exist the minimum conditions necessary for a general upheaval. This was an insurrection by order, a result of a "diktat". The declaration of Dr. Levy and the discussions following that within the German communist Party have thrown some light on this gloomy affair. Any one who does not suffer from incurable blindness can clearly see the implication of Dr. Levy words: "The first push in this action, the form it took did not come from Germany." And since only Moscow had interest in it, it is clear that it came from the head office in Moscow. At the time the Russian Government found itself in difficulties: the strikes in Petrograd, the upheaval of Kronstadt, and general poverty had generated an atmosphere which threatened the government. A diversion was welcome and, unfortunately, Germany provided it. The government communist press continued to publish raving accounts on the "new revolution" and its progress while, at that decisive moment, whoever dared to attack the Soviet Government were considered counter-revolutionaries. During that same period the military tribunals were liquidating the sailors of Kronstadt, the Tcheka hunted anarchists and syndicalists, and the German workers were led to a catastrophy serving as a facade for the soviet leaders. Then they employed, what is now an established practice, the most reprehensible means, without any scruples, to hide from the German workers engaged in the struggle the actual situation in their country. They were saying, among many other stories, that Berlin was ablaze and that the working class in the Rhur had risen as one person when, in fact, there was no response in the country to their movement.

Thus hundreds of workers were condemned to death and forced labour, victims of a secret diplomacy peculiar to the Communist Party. The poor stupid devils in the Communist Headquarters in Berlin, paralyzed by the awe with which they behold Moscow are incapable of anything other than crawling to the dictators in Moscow and even now, they tolerate being publicly lectured by Lenin and Trotsky, acknowledging their servile obedience to the institutions of Moscow. In reality this is simply a ruse to hide the traces that lead from the German Headquarters to Moscow, a new intermediary Machiavellian tactic handled with mastery.